RRC

POLICY Review

LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES
3 3045 01969 6810

APRIL & MAY 2001, NO. 106

THE NEW, BIGGER NATO: FEARS *v.* FACTS
HELLE BERING

REPUBLICAN FUTURES
ELIZABETH ARENS

DEMOCRACY OUT OF BALANCE
IVAN DOHERTY

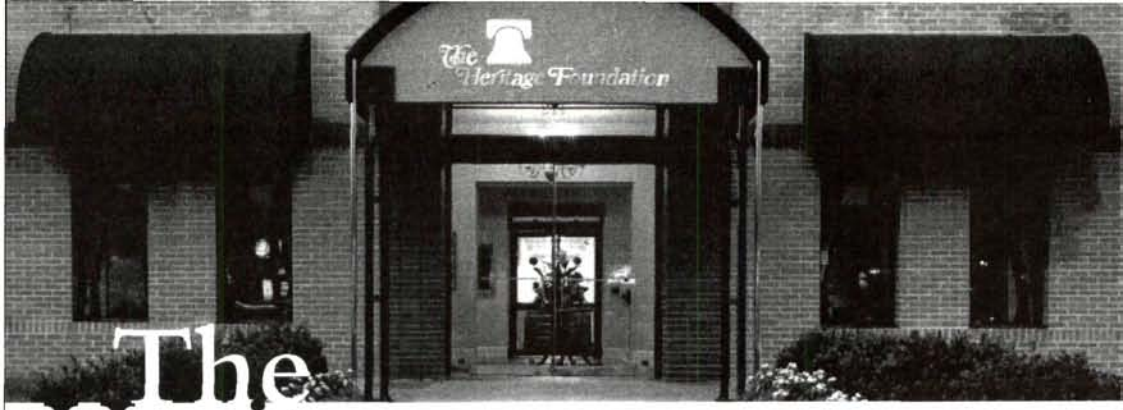
HOW TO BUILD A BETTER TEACHER
ROBERT HOLLAND

ALSO: ESSAYS AND REVIEWS BY
ERIC ROZENMAN, VICTORINO MATUS,
PAUL KENGOR, KENNETH WEINSTEIN,
AND RHODA RABKIN

04>
0 74851 65831 4

6.00 U.S.A.
8.50 CANADA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The Heritage Foundation is one of America's largest public policy research organizations. More than 200,000 contributors make it the most broadly supported think tank in America.

Founded in 1973, Heritage's mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

Heritage's staff pursues this mission by performing timely, accurate research on key policy issues and effectively marketing these findings to our primary audiences: members of Congress, key congressional staff members, policymakers in the executive branch, the nations news media, and the academic and policy communities.

Heritage's products include publications, articles, lectures, conferences, and meetings.

"The Heritage Foundation consistently provides cutting-edge, conservative analysis of public policy issues, as well as informative insights into the workings of our political, governmental and judicial institutions."

—J. Dennis Hastert, *Speaker of the House*

"...the most perfectly tuned politico-intellectual institution since the Manhattan Project."

—The Boston Globe

"...no policy shop has more clout than the conservative Heritage Foundation."

—The Wall Street Journal

"...the most important think tank in the nation's capital."

—The New Republic

Reagan Knows— *"...it's not money or numbers of people or size of the offices that measure Heritage's impact. Your frequent publications, timely research, policy papers, seminars and conferences account for your enormous influence on Capitol Hill and—believe me, I know—at the White House."*

—Ronald Reagan

Flying the Flag— *"Heritage has flown the flag for conservatism over this last quarter-century with pride and distinction."*

—Margaret Thatcher

The Heritage Foundation

214 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.,
Washington, D.C. 20002 • 202-546-4400
www.heritage.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLICY Review

APRIL & MAY 2001, NO. 106

Features

3 **THE NEW, BIGGER NATO: FEARS *v.* FACTS**
The mistaken predictions of critics of enlargement
Helle Bering

13 **REPUBLICAN FUTURES**
A party looking for its next coalition
Elizabeth Arens

25 **DEMOCRACY OUT OF BALANCE**
Civil society can't replace political parties
Ivan Doherty

37 **HOW TO BUILD A BETTER TEACHER**
Centralized certification *v.* value-added assessment
Robert Holland

49 **TODAY'S ARAB ISRAELIS, TOMORROW'S ISRAEL**
Why "separation" can't be the answer for peace
Eric Rozenman

61 **THE ONCE AND FUTURE BERLIN**
A city in a constant state of becoming
Victorino Matus

Books

73 **RONALD REAGAN, AUTHOR**
Paul Kengor on **Reagan, In His Own Hand,** Kiron Skinner, Annelise Anderson, *and* Martin Anderson, editors

77 **THE ETERNAL PRESIDENT**
Kenneth Weinstein on **On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History** *by* John Patrick Diggins

81 **FATTER THAN EVER**
Rhoda Rabkin on **Eat Fat** *by* Richard Klein *and* **Fat: Fighting the Obesity Epidemic** *by* Robert Pool

Letters

93 Gramsci *v.* Toqueville; essential reforms for the military

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLICY *Review*

APRIL & MAY 2001, NO. 106

Editor TOD LINDBERG

Consulting Editor MARY EBERSTADT

Editorial Office Manager KELLY SULLIVAN

Publisher EDWIN J. FEULNER

Associate Publisher ADAM MEYERSON

Policy Review (ISSN 0146-5945) is published bimonthly by The Heritage Foundation, a research and educational institute that formulates and promotes conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense. For more information, write The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002 or visit www.heritage.org. Periodicals postage paid at Washington DC and additional mailing offices.

The opinions expressed in *Policy Review* are those of the authors and editors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Heritage Foundation.

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES: Address letters to *Policy Review*, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002-4999. Telephone: 202-546-4400. Fax: 202-608-6136. Email: polrev@heritage.org. Internet site: www.policyreview.com. Direct advertising inquiries to Elizabeth Arens and reprint permission requests to Kelly Sullivan. Reproduction of editorial content without permission is prohibited.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Contact *Policy Review*, Subscriptions Department, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002-4999, or call toll-free 1-800-566-9449. Foreign subscribers call 202-608-6161. For address changes (allow six weeks), provide old and new address, including ZIP codes. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Policy Review*, Subscriptions Department, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002-4999. Subscription rates: one year, $36; two years, $72; three years, $108. Add $10 per year for foreign delivery. U.S.A. newsstand distribution by Eastern News, Inc., One Media Way, 12406 Route 250, Milan OH 44846-9705. For newsstand inquiries, call 1-800-221-3148.

Copyright © 2001, The Heritage Foundation.

Printed in the United States of America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New, Bigger NATO: Fears *v.* Facts

By HELLE BERING

THE WORLD DID NOT come to an end in 1999. That it didn't was not a surprise to most of us, the year 2000 being a more likely candidate for Apocalypse. Nevertheless, there were some who expected that the year NATO accepted new members from the former Warsaw Pact, a contemporary equivalent of the 10 plagues of Egypt would be visited on the transatlantic military alliance.

The threats came fast and furious from Russian government officials and nationalist politicians. Former general and governor of Siberia Alexander Lebed warned of Russia's intention to create a military counterbalance to a NATO that included Poland. "A similar precedent was created in Poland in 1939," he said, implying that NATO enlargement was the equivalent of Hitler's invasion of Poland. "The price of that precedent was 50 million lives. We won't get away with only 50 million lives today." Subtlety has never been a Russian forte. Gen. Lebed was just one of many Russian officials to bluster. The buffoonish and insufferable Vladimir Zhirinovsky received a great deal of attention in the early days of the NATO expansion

---

Helle Bering is editorial page editor of the Washington Times.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

debate until it was discovered in the West that the Russians considered him a joke. Zhirinovsky charmingly threatened to take back the Baltic countries, blustering, "They are standing in the way of our seaports." President Boris Yeltsin, in the days after the fall of the Soviet Union when he was courting Western support, had confirmed "the sovereign right of each state to choose its own method for guaranteeing its security." However, once the countries of the former Warsaw Pact made clear that their preferred method was NATO membership, the Russian changed his tune. In 1995, Yeltsin blamed the Bosnia debacle on NATO enlargement plans in blunt words: "This is the first sign of what can happen. The first sign. When NATO approaches the borders of the Russian Federation, you can say there will be two military blocs. This is the restoration of what we already had. . . . In that case, we will immediately establish constructive ties with all ex-Soviet republics and form a bloc."

It is hard to grasp the motivations of those who repeated the Russians' bluster here in the West.

While Russian anger and frustration at seeing former vassal states voluntarily choose a former enemy alliance are understandable, it is harder to grasp the motivations of those who repeated the Russians' bluster here in the West (although history teaches us that there will always be some who favor the appeasement of bullying, sad lot that they are). One vociferous critic of NATO enlargement was Michael Mandelbaum, a former Clinton advisor now at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. "NATO expansion is the Titanic of American foreign policy, and the iceberg on which it will founder is Baltic membership," he said. Likewise George F. Kennan, the famous architect of U.S. containment policy towards the Soviet Union — and, one would have thought, an unlikely source for such sentiments — condemned NATO enlargement as "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold war era." Jack Matlock, former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, told a Cato Institute conference in May 1997, "If this process is not stopped, we're going to see a NATO that is no longer capable of pursuing the purposes for which it was created because it will be preoccupied watching its own navel and its expanding waistline."

The fact is, however, that the Russian government eventually did manage to reconcile itself to the first post-Cold War round of NATO enlargement. To some degree, it had been placated by the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1994, which gave Russia certain consultative rights vis-à-vis NATO. In any case, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, the first three new members since the admission of Spain in 1982, were inducted with due ceremony and without protest at the fiftieth anniversary NATO summit in Washington in 1999. Then Russia turned its attention to preventing a second round of enlargement and to undermining American plans to build a national missile

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

defense. During the second Clinton term, the latter of these two objectives was successfully achieved by President Vladimir Putin. While it is probable that Russia will not have similar success with the administration of George W. Bush, there is no doubt that Russia still aims to establish a linkage between NATO enlargement and missile defense, perhaps in the shape of a trade-off. Short of stopping enlargement permanently, Moscow hopes at least to delay a second round of enlargement for several years, until Russia might be in a stronger position itself, perhaps by then having recreated a federation with former republics like Moldova and Belarus.

Now, in the spring of 2001, the debate over the next enlargement round is intensifying. President Bush's anticipated June visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels and to Stockholm for the meeting of the European Union has focused the attention of the nine countries currently aspiring to membership in the alliance: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania. They need to make their case. If another round of admissions is to happen in 2002, as they passionately hope, a decision must be made well before the NATO ministerial meeting in December. As a delaying tactic, Russian President Putin in March announced a $50 million investment in a Western media propaganda campaign to instill doubts and confusion in the ranks of NATO member countries. As Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe expert Paul Goble puts it, "subversion is the weapon of the weak, just as it was for the Soviet Union in the 1930s." Vladimir Putin's KGB experience will indeed come in handy. The Russian counteroffensive could well be more insidious and better orchestrated than anything the bumbling and erratic Boris Yeltsin could muster. It may be instructive, therefore, to look back over some of the cataclysmic predictions that fizzled and foundered as the first enlargement round moved forward.

Russian democratic development will be undermined by NATO *enlargement.* With the benefit of hindsight, this argument almost seems quaint. Nonetheless, the argument was often made that enlarging NATO would create with Russia a tragic repetition of the unconditional surrender imposed on Germany in 1919 at Versailles. Russia would find itself isolated and nurture a sense of deep resentment that could only be alleviated by revenge — much as Adolf Hitler saw it as his mission to avenge the Treaty of Versailles.

Well, resentment has indeed festered, but here the basis for the comparison ends. Whereas the Allies imposed unconditional surrender and impoverished Germany further with war reparations (justified though they were), the West continued to accord Russia near-superpower prestige, for example broadening the Group of Seven industrialized nations to the G-8 to include Moscow. Money and aid flowed to Russia from abroad all through the 1990s. Total aid from the United States alone was more than $5 billion. Assistance from multilateral institutions amounts to $9 billion. Rather than seeking to bankrupt Russia, the West has helped stabilize the postcommunist governments and enabled Russia to keep its economy afloat without a full

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

measure of necessary reform and with substantial corruption, as much of the aid money made its way into the Swiss bank accounts of the "oligarchs." In sum, there was no intention by the victors in the Cold War to punish the loser. (In any event, Russians, who do not like to be compared to imperial Germans, adamantly deny they *lost* the Cold War. In their view, they *ended* it.) Western largess meant the Russian government simply could not afford to cut ties with the West or take too belligerent a posture as long as it depended on the flow of cash from the International Monetary Fund. The current Russian leadership also understands this fact.

By now, it would be ludicrous to deny that Russian progress toward a stable democracy has slowed to a halt. Putin, elected president in March 2000 in an election that certainly did not qualify as free or fair, is a former KGB officer and has behaved like one since he first took the reins of power as prime minister in autumn 1999. One has only to look at the revitalized Russian military campaign in Chechnya in the summer and fall of 1999 under Putin's direction, or the horrible loss of the *Kursk* nuclear submarine in August 2000, or the campaign to shut down Russia's free media, to see that a return to autocratic ways has taken place. Russia expert Richard F. Staar of the Hoover Institution believes Putin's intentions can be gleaned from the document "Reform of the Presidential Administration," written by three of his closest advisers. "All three principal contributors agreed that it would not be necessary to develop democratic institutions but rather return to the use of force," Staar writes. "The latter is to be implemented by the presidential administration, which itself will be transformed into an organ of control over society. The government (Council of Ministers) will decide economic issues, without deviation from the political line. In practice, this would mean total control over society by the Kremlin."

Russian nationalism and communist revanchism have been factors in Russia's political life almost from the beginning of the 1990s.

Did the West provoke this relapse into authoritarianism? This much has been suggested by several analysts, among them Stanley Kober, a research fellow at the Cato Institute and author of the paper "NATO Expansion and the Danger of a Second Cold War." But Russian nationalism and communist revanchism have been factors in Russia's political life almost from the beginning of the 1990s, whereas NATO enlargement did not take place until 1999. Irrespective of what happened in the countries of the former Warsaw Pact in terms of military alliances, Russia in the early 1990s immediately began a steep decline from which it shows few signs of recovery. It did not take very long for the great hopes (in Russia and the West as well) about the postcom-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

munist era to be sorely disappointed. Shattered expectations, not NATO enlargement, are therefore to blame. As Kober himself points out, as early as 1993 Yegor Gaider's reform party finished second in the parliamentary elections, and in 1995 it failed even to win representation in the new Duma, which was dominated by communists and ultranationalists. All this transpired while the man at the helm of the ship of state identified himself as "Russia's chief economic reformer." By 1996, Sergei Kovalev, head of the Russian Human Rights Commission, warned, "the danger that Russia will become a police state has become very real."

NATO did all this? The truth is that during those years, the U.S. government was hedging on the question of enlargement, holding off precisely for the reason that it did not wish to cause trouble with the Russians.

Much has been made of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's contention that he was promised by a number of people — from President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher — that NATO would not expand to include the former East Germany. Russian revanchism, some argue, is therefore perfectly justified, because the United States and NATO provoked the Russians by failing to keep that promise. However, versions of the events of 1990 differ greatly. No promise was ever made in writing, nor could it have been. With the exception of East Germany, which ceased to exist, the countries of the Warsaw Pact were sovereign nations. And they desperately wanted into NATO. It was in fact Gorbachev himself who allowed them to decide their own fates, both in terms of political systems and alliances. Rightfully, it is one of the decisions on which Gorbachev prides himself today.

Moving the borders of NATO *to the east will provoke the Russian military.* This is a version of the argument above. Russian rhetoric has certainly been red hot. Former Russian Defense Secretary Igor Rodinov in 1996 warned of dire consequences, in particular the remilitarization of Belarus and the possibility of armed confrontation over Russian access to the enclave of Kaliningrad, the former East Prussia, which is located between Lithuania and Poland. With either one or both of those countries in NATO, the Russian defense minister threatened armed confrontation. Russia in the spring of 2001 is now resorting to the very same threats, should Lithuania be granted membership in a second round of enlargement. This time, however, Russia is turning up the pressure a notch, promising to arm Kaliningrad with nuclear weapons.

With Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO, Rodinov complained to the *Moscow News* in 1996, NATO would grow eastwards by almost 500 miles. "This would significantly reduce the early warning time available to Russia's antimissile systems." (Wait a minute: They weren't supposed to have any of those, were they?) NATO forces would grow from 47 divisions to 60, from 101 brigades to 130. NATO would increase its number

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of battle tanks by 24 percent, armored cars by 22 percent, artillery by 18 percent. NATO would acquire 280 military air bases and increase its number of aircraft by 15 percent, combat helicopters by 13 percent. NATO warships would increase by 17 percent and with the addition of Poland's Baltic Sea ports, the Russian Baltic fleet would be hemmed in. As awful as all of this sounds, the Russian military has not been provoked to take any action in the two years following NATO expansion — except to beat up the small hapless nation of Chechens who would undoubtedly apply for NATO membership if they could.

NATO *enlargement will create a new division of Europe.* An honest admission might be that any new division of Europe that moved the border of freedom to the east surely would be beneficial from the point of view of the United States and the West, no less so than for the countries involved. As former Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek stated at a summit of the foreign ministers of nine aspiring NATO members in Vilnius, Lithuania, in May 2000, "The day Poland joined NATO was the happiest day of my life." Still, we need not grant that any new division of Europe has resulted from NATO expansion, nor that any such division would follow from a second round of enlargement. If we look at both new and aspiring members, we can see that no dramatic fault lines have emerged within the family of European nations.

In fact, expanding NATO (and the European Union as well) is already resulting in a more unified continent than at any time since the nineteenth century (when, one might add, the nations of Europe were still prone to fighting wars among themselves, something nearly unthinkable between the stable, democratic, prosperous nations of the EU today). Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic now serve as advocates for aspiring members to their north, south, and east, and a new level of cooperation has sprung up between them. Today, Poland and Lithuania, former enemies, are cooperating militarily to a hitherto inconceivable degree. Romania and Hungary have dealt with their border disputes. Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, rather than fighting for individual recognition, are working together militarily in a Baltic brigade. The purpose of the May 2000 Vilnius summit was for the nine NATO aspirants to come together to issue a statement of common purpose. They have shown that they want to be in an alliance with each other, as well as with Western Europe, a huge step forward for countries with a history of rivalry, warfare, and instability. The fact is that as long as there is an open door to a new round of enlargement, there will be no division within Europe. Shutting that door tight, however, would create one.

Finally, let us not forget that it was the Soviet Union that drew the Iron Curtain across Europe, not the West. It was Joseph Stalin who denied Poles the right to free elections agreed to at Yalta, and it was the Soviets who warned Central and Eastern European countries against accepting Marshall Plan aid from the United States. To say that NATO enlargement creates a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new "Iron Curtain effect" is to forget where the threat to peace in Europe originated for 45 years. Unless aggression arises from the east, from Russia and its allies among the former Soviet republics, no such division will be drawn again. NATO has never been an offensive alliance, and notwithstanding the military operations in Bosnia and Kosovo to deal with a brutal dictator, the contention that NATO is an offensive alliance that menaces Russia is as absurd today as it ever was.

NATO *enlargement will be prohibitively expensive.* In the debate leading up to the 1999 Senate vote ratifying enlargement, cost estimates for the United States and for the new member states varied wildly. Unsurprisingly, those opposed to enlargement reckoned the costs much higher than those who supported it. Estimates ranged from $27 billion to $110 billion in total. The burden carried by the United States was estimated by the RAND Corporation as $14 billion and by the Clinton administration as $2 billion (the administration figures did not include guaranteed loan programs to help aspirant countries qualify for membership).

So far, the bulk of the actual costs of enlargement have been borne primarily by the new member countries. The United States regularly (and rightly) complains about NATO members not devoting sufficient resources to their defense budgets. It was no accident that in NATO's Kosovo air operations, decision making was coordinated by the United States, Britain, and France — since those were the NATO members contributing the bulk of aircraft. Some countries' forces are woefully inadequate. But the problem of too-small defense budgets is hardly confined to *new* members. As for the U.S. defense budget, commitments to peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo have been far greater drains than NATO enlargement.

The United States is overextended and will go into decline as a result of NATO *commitments.* An early form of this argument was made in the late 1980s by Harvard historian Paul Kennedy in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. With timing that could only be described as singularly bad, Kennedy predicted in 1988 that the United States would follow the course of the Spanish and British empires: "The United States runs the risk, so familiar to historians of the rise and fall of previous Great Powers, of what might roughly be called imperial overstretch." Inevitably, decline would ensure.

On the popular level, no one distilled the essence of this argument better than newspaper columnist and former Reform Party presidential candidate Patrick J. Buchanan. It is an argument arising from an "America First" point of view that is often characterized as isolationist. As some will recall, Buchanan's book, *A Republic Not an Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny*, made quite a splash early in the 2000 presidential campaign. In the book, Buchanan darkly warned about the urgent need for a course correction on foreign policy: "For, with little discussion or dissent, America has undertaken the most open-ended and extravagant commitments in history."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Having described the demise by overextension of the British, French, Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian empires, he wrote, "Our country is today traveling the same path that was trod by the British empire to the same fate. Do we want America to end that way?"

Buchanan saw the enlargement of NATO as the ultimate manifestation of America's unwise hegemonist vision. Particularly galling to him was Sen. Richard Lugar's statement that "If history teaches us anything, it is that the United States is always drawn into such European conflicts because our vital interests are ultimately engaged." On the contrary, Buchanan wrote, "history teaches us no such thing." "Between 1789 and 1914 there were seven major wars. With the exception of an undeclared naval war with France under John Adams, and the War of 1812, the United States stayed out of them all. As for World Wars I and II, the United States kept clear of both conflicts for more than two years before going in."

That the United States did not take part in the war of Piedmont and France against Austria in 1859-60 has nothing to teach us about the U.S. role today.

This argument is completely specious. The United States of the 1800s (the century in which most of the European wars he cites took place — the Crimean War, for instance, or the Austro-Prussian War of 1866) was a very different country from the United States of the twenty-first century, with very different international interests. And the fact is that the United States *did not* escape being drawn into the two great wars of the twentieth century. In a third, the Cold War, it was one of the two protagonists. The United States as we know it today was inescapably shaped as an international power by this experience. That the United States did not take part in the war of Piedmont and France against Austria in 1859-60 has nothing to teach us about the U.S. role today.

Moreover, the Buchanan thesis, even if couched in populist terms, is clearly far out of touch with the sentiments of the American electorate. Most Americans, though they may be chauvinistic, do not want an "America First" kind of world. A majority supported the first round of NATO expansion and probably will support the second round as well, given honest presidential leadership. This is a good part of the reason why the Buchanan presidential candidacy in the 2000 election drew the support of a mere 1 percent of voters.

Neither is it factually true that the United States is a country in decline. The American military is in some respects overextended by the scattered peacekeeping demands made on a diminished force structure, but American power at the start of the twenty-first century is supreme and undisputed to the point of causing resentment even among our friends and allies. (The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

French, for instance, suffer incurably from hyperpower envy.) American economic dominance is equally unchallenged. At a meeting of the Gorbachev Foundation of North America in 1998, I asked Paul Kennedy whether he was not feeling a little sheepish about his predictions. "There is still time," he said. "I was talking about 2020." Indeed, it is a truism that sooner or later, all great powers decline. But there are no signs that the United States is anywhere but in the ascendant stage of its national life. The Roman Empire lasted for 400 years. The United States as a great power has been around for just 100, as a superpower for just 50, and for little more than 10 as the "hyperpower," to take the French term as a compliment, or at least as an accurate statement about reality.

Nuclear disarmament will suffer. Another awful consequence of NATO enlargement, its potential to galvanize "resistance in the Duma to the START II and START III treaties," was spelled out in a June 1997 open letter to President Clinton signed by more than 40 ambassadors, congressmen, and former generals. They contended that a Russia in decline would renew its dependence on nuclear weapons as the only affordable response to NATO expansion.

These arguments were wrong on both predictions. First, the START II treaty was ratified in the Duma the moment a Russian president made it a priority, which Valdimir Putin did as one of his first official acts. Under President Yeltsin START II had languished, undoubtedly to the satisfaction of the Kremlin. Secondly, rather than an increase in Russia's dependence on its nuclear forces, we have seen these forces decline rapidly. Russia is now actively seeking arms reduction to unprecedented levels in order to cope with the costly problem of keeping its warheads secure. The Russian government also recently announced that it would be increasing spending on its conventional forces.

Political divisions in the United States will increase, given that the NATO *enlargement vote was taken without the benefit of a real debate.* Many opponents of NATO expansion had the extraordinary brazenness to claim that the topic had received no public airing. But given that the subject was under almost constant discussion throughout most of the 1990s, especially after 1994, any senator who found himself taken by surprise when the vote finally happened in May 1998 really had no excuses. When the Senate vote did take place, the result was overwhelmingly positive, 80-19, better than the administration had hoped for. There was not much evidence of rancor or bitterness among the senators, despite all the complaints that took place in the weeks before. A second round naturally ought to and certainly will receive a similarly thorough airing — including extensive hearings by numerous congressional committees.

Russia will gain veto power over NATO *decisions.* The signing of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997, a conciliatory step by the Clinton administration intended to give Russia a stake in European security, worried many supporters of enlargement. Doubters thought that the Clinton administration had gone too far and had in effect handed a veto on NATO plans to the Russians. As Henry Kissinger wrote in a much quoted op-ed article, "I will hold my nose and support enlargement even though the conditions may be extremely dangerous. . . . Whoever heard of a military alliance begging with a weakened adversary? NATO should not be turned into an instrument to conciliate Russia or Russia will undermine it."

The Founding Act established a joint council to manage relations between Russia and the alliance, a body that meets in Brussels once a month. Clearly, this council did not hinder the first round of expansion, nor the decision to act militarily in Kosovo. There is no reason to believe the Founding Act will influence the second round of enlargement, unless Vladimir Putin is much smarter about playing his few cards, and the United States allows him to do so.

POLAND, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, and Hungary are fully fledged NATO members today, and yet none of the dire predictions surrounding their accession have been realized. No cataclysm has struck Europe, and U.S.-Russian relations haven't collapsed. The usual suspects — some of whom are Republican Senators — can be counted on to again raise their voices in objection to a new round of enlargement, but eventually to vote for it. Given the change in party control of the White House, it is likewise possible that Democrats will express more reservations this time than when enlargement was the policy of a Democratic administration. But in the end, there are few signs of diminishing political support.

Extrapolating from recent history, we are certainly justified in believing that a second round of enlargement will be successfully completed and free of negative consequences, as was the first. Some years from now, we may expect that the rest of the former Warsaw Pact nations will be a part of NATO, and the Baltic countries as well. The case against enlargement was made at length and tested by reality, and it has failed on all counts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Republican Futures

By Elizabeth Arens

Mesmerized by stark swaths of red and blue, political writers studying the 2000 electoral map have produced some alarming analyses. In the January issue of *Commentary* magazine, for example, Terry Teachout laments that the United States has become "two nations" separated by vast differences in lifestyle and philosophy. Responding to the article, Gertrude Himmelfarb, an earlier proponent of the theory that the population of the United States has fragmented into two groups with distinct and often hostile worldviews, agrees that if not two nations, we have certainly become "two cultures."

This interpretation very soon found superficial support in the furor surrounding President Bush's nomination of John Ashcroft for attorney general. Bush and Gore strategists, as if by collusion, had managed to keep controversial cultural issues off the table during the presidential campaign. But the Ashcroft nomination demolished their careful structures of inoffensive words and images with extraordinary speed. Ashcroft's record on racial issues, attitude toward homosexuality, and stance on abortion stirred activist organizations on the left into a vehement protest. Images of the "armies of compassion" were dispelled in favor of the bloody coat hanger on one side, the aborted fetus on the other. Democratic senators, initially inclined to approve Ashcroft on account of standard deference accorded Cabinet nominations, respect for a former colleague, and the prevailing rhetoric of bipartisanship, were caught by surprise. They ended up subjecting Ashcroft to

---

Elizabeth Arens is assistant editor of the Public Interest.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

harsh questioning, and the vast majority voted against his nomination. The controversy had all the appearances of another outbreak of our ongoing culture wars.

Yet the noise surrounding Ashcroft died down as quickly as it flared up. Within days of his confirmation, the political whirlwind had moved on. And the electoral map is less easy evidence than it might appear. Red districts were not uniformly Republican, nor blue districts uniformly Democratic, and the voting breakdown in most counties was closer to 60-40 than 90-10. So where does this leave us? The United States has a population which is more conservative, and a population which is less conservative. There are people at the far ends of both sides of this spectrum, true believers who find the perspective of the other side alien if not morally disgusting. The geographical distribution of these groups may have evolved. But this is a political landscape not fundamentally different from that which has existed throughout American history.

Losing the center?

THAT SAID, REPUBLICANS still have cause for concern. One need not be an impassioned culture warrior to cast votes on election day. And if the electoral map isn't evidence of a national cultural crisis, it does underscore the dwindling potential of the Republican Party's longtime electoral coalition and the party's need for a new political framework. Why should a refiguring of Republican politics be necessary, given the eventual triumph of the GOP candidate in what looked like daunting electoral circumstances — a thriving economy, a popular incumbent? Parsing the electoral returns, writers in the *National Review*, the *Weekly Standard*, and the *Wall Street Journal* all discerned less-than-promising trends. Immigrant groups for which the Republicans had high hopes — Asians and Hispanics in particular — voted overwhelmingly for Gore. Also discouraging for the GOP, upscale suburban areas, longtime bastions of Republicanism, grow increasingly Democratic. Gore triumphed in New York City suburbs like Westchester county, Nassau county, and Bergen and Passaic counties in New Jersey, even in Greenwich, Conn., the Bush family seat. The notoriously old-WASP towns of mainline Philadelphia also went Democratic, as did the suburbs of Chicago and Detroit, and several wealthy California counties. Democrats control the coasts, the cultural and intellectual centers of the nation. And throughout the red Republican middle of the electoral map, the small blue areas tend to be the densest and most dynamic — urban areas and their suburbs, which are now home not only to residences but to the business ventures of the information age.

As Daniel Casse pointed out in the March issue of *Commentary*, it looks like the GOP is now paying for the success of the electoral strategy it began to pursue in the 1960s and which culminated in the election of Ronald

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reagan in 1980. From a base made up in large part of pro-free-market, relatively traditional businessmen, the Republicans built a political framework which embraced formerly Democratic social conservatives of the South, Midwest, and West. They developed a powerful ideology around this new coalition, the crux of which was the notion of limited government. This principle had long appealed to traditionalists who believe that the government had expanded far beyond its proper sphere, impeding the functioning of the market and turning the country in an increasingly socialistic direction. But with Southern and Western social conservatives, the ideal of limited government took on a cultural dimension and a strong emotional quality. These Americans feared and detested government, because they had come to believe that political power was permanently lodged in the hands of a left-wing elite intent on imposing institutionally a set of values alien to their own.

While uncomfortable with some elements of their party members' social conservatism, the more moderate, Eastern Republicans did share what can be considered traditional social values (including an emphasis on work and merit, an opposition to welfare and redistributive economic policies, and support for traditional family structure). Moreover, the Democratic Party, a profligate spender and exponent of far-left social values, held little attraction for them. The Republican Party's current demographic woes can be traced both to the waning of earlier affinities and to the new respectability of the Democrats. Survey data as well as anecdotal evidence suggest that affluent Americans have far more liberal social values than they did in the past. Moreover, under the Clinton administration, the Democrats managed to shed their reputation for fiscal irresponsibility and for cultural radicalism, at least for the time being. Clinton was blessed with highly favorable economic winds, as well as a revered Federal Reserve chairman. In addition, Clinton succeeded in refashioning the welfare state rhetorically, and to some extent in fact, into a safety net and economic springboard not for the lazy and parasitic but for the great mass of working people.

All of these factors served to make the Democrats more palatable to upper middle class suburbanites. Though friendly to market principles, like most Americans they have grown accustomed to and do not view as threatening the level of responsibility the federal government has assumed since the New Deal. Furthermore, they lack the visceral distrust of government that took root in the South and parts of the West, the attitude that associates Washington with an alien and hostile culture. This attitude, in fact, tends to puzzle and frighten moderates, along with the bedrock social conservatism associated with it. The image of the Republican Party prevalent among the today's young, affluent elite is less of stuffy pin-striped bankers than of backward and bigoted rednecks, Kansas school boards, and gun-toting extremists.

The notion that the old rhetoric fails to captivate and the Reagan alliance no longer holds together is not news to the Republican Party. While strate-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gists debated the issue internally, *Weekly Standard* writer Christopher Caldwell advanced the argument in highly public fashion with his 1998 *Atlantic Monthly* article, "The Southern Captivity of the GOP." Presenting a persuasive if overdetermined analysis, Caldwell argued that the Southern wing of the party had chased away its moderate wing. He concluded dramatically that the GOP was "obsolescent." This past year's election results lend weight to his claims, if not of the party's obsolescence, than of the increasing concentration of its support. All sides now concede that the "Republican Revolution" of 1994 was not, as was thought at the time, the dawning of a new age.

Enter "compassionate conservatism"

OVER THE COURSE of the recent campaign, Republican leaders and the party's intellectual class visibly strove to cultivate a new constituency and new political language. A variety of frameworks were proposed, offering different solutions to the principal Republican dilemma: how to handle the religious, culturally conservative, largely Southern Americans who now make up the party's base and have become both the GOP's greatest strength and its constant irritant. These Americans are the party's most active advocates and dependable supporters, but association with them can also frighten away voters who might push the party's electoral support above the 48 percent mark. They give the party its moral fervor, but their moralism too often appears to others to shade into narrow-mindedness and the invasion of privacy. In short, the Republicans need an approach that will keep social and religious conservatives enthusiastic and capture their sense of purpose, while dulling their sectarianism and channeling their energy into policies with broader appeal.

From its beginning, the Bush campaign seized on the theme of "compassionate conservatism." The slogan is commonly associated with Marvin Olasky, who took it for the title of his 1999 book, but the phrase predates the book and the theory has broader roots, leaning on the works of civil-society theorists and Catholic and evangelical communitarians of the early 1990s. These writers argued that great social benefits would result if the provision of various welfare services was devolved from large impersonal government bureaucracies to local, private, most often "faith-based" groups.

As governor of Texas, Bush had embraced policies such as education reform and support of "faith-based" organizations that meshed with the ideas of these thinkers, and Republican strategists urged that the language of compassionate conservatism would be the key to returning moderate, affluent voters to the Republican fold. For most of his campaign, Bush shied away from the Reagan/Gingrich antigovernment message. Like Clintonian Third Way liberalism, compassionate conservatism involves judicious

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reliance on market mechanisms and local civic renewal. But unlike Reagan or the congressional warriors of 1994, Bush didn't talk about slashing government or scaling back the federal bureaucracy. On the contrary, he granted the principle Democrats had long fought for: that the federal government should be the ultimate guarantor of health, employment, and financial security. In the language of his convention speech, Social Security and Medicare must be "strengthened" and "repaired." Local schools must be held federally accountable. Private charity was important, but the state must aid and support it, "helping the helper, encouraging the inspired." Compassionate conservatism may favor market incentives, decentralization, and private charity, but it envisions the federal government overarching it all, supporting and nurturing.

While moving away from the conservatism of limited government (let alone its libertarian variant) in order to attract moderate voters, compassionate conservatism aimed to hold on to the religious wing of the party by praising faith and the faithful and promising to channel government responsibilities through their local organizations. Candidate Bush constantly affirmed the importance of religion both in his own personal life and in the nation's civic life. He argued that many social welfare services were better performed by private groups that could combine material assistance with a strong moral message. He also boosted the role of religion and religious organizations in education, offering vouchers that would enable families to send their children to religious schools. Such a policy had appeal for religious conservatives, even when they would not directly benefit, since it ratified their belief that parents should have a greater role in shaping the content of their children's education.

This moderate/right-wing coalition would hold together in part through altering the moderates' view of religious conservatism. By pandering less to their hostility to government and mistrust of secular society, and by playing up their charitable efforts and biblical responsibility to do good works, compassionate conservatism hoped to soften the public image of the religious right. The Kansas School Board would be replaced by the dedicated soup kitchen volunteer. Moderates could be made to believe that religious conservatives, just as much as themselves, wanted "to leave no child behind."

Enter "national greatness"

CAN A SUCCESSFUL coalition be built around the foundations of compassionate conservatism? It is difficult to judge purely on the basis of the recent election, since Bush himself retreated from this vocabulary as the campaign wore on, Al Gore adopted a populist posture, and the debate reverted to a more traditional left/ right dynamic. It appears that early on, Bush's "compassion" was instrumental in casting him as a more moderate kind of Republican, in contrast to the rabble-rousing mem-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bers of his party in Congress. On the other hand, many voters, particularly males, were turned off by compassionate conservatism's sentimental tone, preferring the "straight talk" of John McCain.

For a theme pushed heavily by the GOP frontrunner, compassionate conservatism found surprisingly few adherents among Republican intellectuals in Washington. With the principal exception of *City Journal*, the major conservative magazines were at times critical of both the trappings and the substance of compassionate conservatism, and many proposed rival frameworks for the campaign and beyond.

The *Weekly Standard* emerged with a theme that was dubbed "national greatness" conservatism. This was a politics that married the interventionist, moralistic foreign policy supported by its editor William Kristol with the patriotic message of John McCain, which emphasized the continuing relevance of classic American ideals and sought to bring public service to a more central place in American life. The magazine never formally endorsed McCain, but numerous editorials argued that McCain was the type of candidate the Republican Party badly needed, someone with an impressive biography, someone politically centrist but with the ability to galvanize an apathetic public with calls for reform. The editors wrote that "McCain's campaign reminds us that citizenship entails more than just voting, and the business of America is more than just business." The winning Republican candidate, they argued, is the one "who can convince voters that the presidential campaign isn't about who can deliver the most chum; it's about America's purpose and greatness." After McCain bowed out, the magazine continued to sound these themes and urge that Bush take them up.

Major conservative magazines were at times critical of both the trappings and the substance of compassionate conservatism.

The *Weekly Standard*'s editors were explicit about how their approach intended to tackle the problem of the social right — it would channel their moralism and traditionalism into a patriotic rather than religious politics. Describing a McCain campaign speech in a March 2000 editorial, Kristol and David Brooks wrote that "when John McCain starts talking about religious faith, he ends up talking about patriotism." Perhaps unwittingly, "McCain would redirect a religiously based moral conservatism into a patriotically grounded moral appeal." They added: "by framing this moral crusade as patriotic rather than a religious movement, McCain could create an alliance between the independents and most social conservatives."

The series of *Weekly Standard* editorials outlining the national greatness theme presented a succinct and coherent account of the state of the American political landscape, the appeal of John McCain, and the promise his themes hold for a Republican Party. But even members of the magazine's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

staff, more than one of whom has commented that "there's no 'there' there with national greatness," admit that the theme lacks an accompanying domestic policy agenda. Campaign finance reform was the central theme of the McCain campaign. The *Standard* argued sympathetically that McCain's obsession with reducing corporate influence in politics promised the hope of reviving active citizenship, but it never endorsed his proposals. The editors insisted that a new way must be found to talk about government, one that portrayed participation in the public sector as noble, not parasitic, and which acknowledged government's positive contribution to American life. In his controversial editorial "The Era of Small Government is Over," David Brooks wrote that "conservatism has never just been about government getting out of the way . . . it is possible to use government in a limited but energetic way to advance . . . conservative ends." Nonetheless, the *Standard* never developed specific proposals for "limited but energetic" government action, nor did it back away from its support for traditional Republican measures.

McCain's inspiring history was central to the resonance of his patriotic message.

It is worth asking whether a theme emphasizing national greatness would continue to captivate if advanced by a candidate without a McCain-like record of service to his country. There can be no doubt that McCain's extraordinary and inspiring history was central to his popularity as a candidate and to the resonance of his patriotic message. Voiced by other politicians, appeals to patriotism might sound narrow or jingoistic; by others, mere rhetoric. Additionally, there is little evidence that even McCain would have succeeded in absorbing the religious right into a more moderate politics. Of course, McCain fatally cut short his chances of wooing the right by attacking religious leaders Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell as "agents of intolerance." Even before this campaign catastrophe, however, religious conservatives were not enthusiastic about the McCain candidacy.

Enter the "new investor class"

An alternative framework for politics and policy, one which has less rhetorical potential but is perhaps more grounded in voter's immediate interests, centers on the idea of the "new investor class." This approach has been promoted in the *National Review* by Richard Nadler and NR editor Ramesh Ponnuru and on the op-ed page of the *Wall Street Journal* by Lawrence Kudlow and Paul Gigot. In a nutshell, these writers argue that since investors tend to lean Republican, the party should endeavor both to court them and to create more of them. As a political strategy, this approach sidesteps hot-button cultural issues in favor of a relentlessly economic message.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The growth in the number of investors appears to be one demographic development Republicans can cheer. The numbers of Americans participating in the stock market, either directly or through investment plans sponsored by their employers, has risen to over 80 million. In 1998, according to the Federal Reserve Board's Survey of Consumer Finances, 48.8 percent of American households owned stock equity through some means. The rate of ownership grew by over 17 percentage points in the course of the preceding decade. This increase includes a jump of more than 20 percentage points among Americans earning from $25,000 to $50,000. A considerable percentage of these stock owners have traditionally held their equity in pension plans which they had little power to influence and hence little reason to pay attention to. However, defined benefit retirement plans, in which workers automatically receive a specified pension, are being rapidly supplanted by defined contribution plans, in which workers choose the amount of their contribution to an investment account over which they exert some control. This and other trends, proponents of an investor class approach argue, mean that workers are following their holdings more closely and managing them more actively.

Polling data suggest that investors do incline towards Republican positions — supporting cuts in the capital gains and estate taxes, favoring Social Security privatization, and looking negatively on new government regulation and antitrust action. In the 2000 election, the CNN exit poll recorded that voting investors supported Bush over Gore by 51 percent to 46 percent. This electoral result stems in part from the fact that investors on balance are wealthier than noninvestors, and wealthier voters on balance tend to vote Republican (though less now than in the past). Still, several surveys indicate that investors are more free-market oriented and likely to lean Republican than noninvestors who are demographically similar.

Proponents of an investor class strategy argue the Republican Party should work actively to expand the ranks of investors by opening, via government policy, new avenues for individual participation in the market. The first item on their agenda has been George W. Bush's Social Security plan, which would divert incoming funds into individual accounts that are personally owned and privately managed. But that is far from the end. Through generous use of matching tax credits, federal and state governments could encourage individual investment accounts to save for education, home ownership, medical expense, and entrepreneurial ventures. Eventually, Nadler envisions the formation of a single, universal account that could be used for all of these purposes.

As *National Review* sees it, the investor class presents, finally, an opportunity to emulate the Democrats' success in building constituencies for their party. Through welfare benefits, the hiring of "100,000 new teachers," and liberal immigration policies, Democrats created large voting blocs tied tightly to their party and policies. Ponnuru, Nadler, and Kudlow believe the investor strategy to be similarly self-sustaining. Once new investors enter the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

financial markets, they will eventually come to support tax cuts and pro-business policies. (This is the group which, initially sympathetic to Gore's rhetorical assaults on big drug companies, watched with dismay as the value of their Pfizer stock fell.) And as their wariness of the market wanes, they become more likely to support the further privatization and marketization of government responsibilities. Thus their ties to the Republican Party would strengthen, as would their commitment to the expansion of "investor class" policies.

Can a strategy succeed which seems based exclusively on economic interest? True, these interests can be cast as something broader when advanced, as Bush began to in the campaign debates, in terms of the value of ownership, responsibility, and freedom of choice. But some writers, Nadler in particular, have taken an even broader approach, arguing that investor class policies offer a remedy for our most difficult political problems. Social Security is fast running out of money — why not encourage workers to invest on their own, thus taking control of their future and earning a much larger return to boot? Many of our public schools are failing — why not provide incentives for people to save the money to send their children to private or parochial schools? Health care system in crisis? Support the formation of investment accounts to pay for all basic medical needs short of severe illness. Need to jump start a flagging economy? Design tax policies to favor investment funds for the opening of new entrepreneurial ventures. In this fashion, the arguments of investor class proponents reach beyond private economic concerns and toward broad public policy.

The investor class presents, finally, an opportunity to emulate Democrats' success in building constituencies for their party.

There are aspects of investor class policies that might give Republicans pause. To base so much of the social safety net on the strength of investments is to create a powerful temptation for government intervention to boost the market artificially. Additionally, the proposed matching grants and tax incentives seem likely to further complicate the already unwieldy tax code. The implementation stage, however, is still far in the future. It remains to be seen whether full-blown marketization of social welfare, a notion born of boom-time market optimism, will continue to captivate during a prolonged period of recession or a stagnating stock market.

Clearly, an investor class approach sidesteps the more divisive social issues in the hope of attracting adherents among moderates. But it is difficult to see what this approach offers to the religious wing of the party. More than the other frameworks discussed above, it lacks a cultural dimension. Furthermore, prominent social conservatives such as Gary Bauer have come out against Social Security privatization. Noting this, Ponnuru has argued

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"it has to help conservatives of all stripes if capital ownership makes people think harder about the long term consequences of their actions and about the behavioral conditions of long-term success." No doubt, but investment-savvy urban elites are just the sort of people that religious conservatives view warily. And from the perspective of those elites, though the editors of the *National Review* would like them to believe otherwise, free-market policies are not bound together in a seamless and inescapable logic with opposition to abortion, gun control, and the prohibition of prayer in public schools. Advocates of an investor class politics promote their strategy as a more hard-headed alternative to the sentimentality of compassionate conservatism and the vagueness of national greatness. But it seems they themselves would benefit from a more hard-headed grappling with the priorities of their party's religious wing.

The Bush beginning

To find flaws with these different strategies is not to discredit their creative and intelligent authors, nor to suggest that a perfect formula is achievable. Some amalgam of all these approaches — one marrying patriotism, an appeal to material interests, greater individual freedom, and concern for the welfare of the less fortunate — could conceivably build an invincible party. But no one has managed to replicate Reagan's success in building this kind of amalgam in the postcommunist era, when old battles have been won and new problems loom. Bush took up this challenge in his inaugural address, and came off well with his four-part theme of "civility, courage, compassion and character."

Can he continue to do so once the policy battles have begun?

Bush launched his agenda on the note he sounded throughout the campaign: compassionate conservatism. He early established the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, an office designed "to expand the role of such efforts in communities and increase their capacity through executive action, legislation, Federal and private funding, and regulatory relief." Debate about the office has concentrated on its faith-based dimension; secular organizations that might find expanded support under this administration have barely been discussed. This focus has perhaps been to Bush's detriment, since his proposals have drawn fire both from liberals who declare that they threaten the barrier between church and state, and from some religious conservatives, who argue that Bush's stated intention to enforce a strict separation between a church's charitable and evangelical activities will promote bureaucratic meddling and destroy the element of church social services that makes them so effective. It seems unlikely, though, that these criticisms will damage Bush's popularity among religious Americans, given the ongoing rhetorical validation of "faith" that he offers.

Among political centrists, Bush is running up against one of the more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interesting paradoxes of the middle-American political mind. In survey after survey, Americans insist that their nation has suffered a moral decline, caused in part by a gradual attenuation of religious belief. They are recorded as believing that the United States would be better off if the public and our political leaders were more religious. This mentality, which seems to favor religion generically, without regard for denomination, is very new in our country, which has seen fierce sectarian battles. It is in fact a symptom of the attenuation it laments, and it is the only attitude which could permit an office such as the one President Bush has established, which is designed to give support indiscriminately to Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim organizations. But these same surveys also record American's firm distaste for coercion, especially in matters of religious belief. (So much so that a majority of Americans are recorded as believing that children should select their own religious affiliations.) The possibility that people might be badgered into accepting a religion in the course of curing an addiction or getting off welfare provokes deep discomfort.

Republicans started talking about the poor just as the Democrats backed away to embrace "working families."

Ultimately, however, Bush's faith-based activities may not continue to receive the attention, both positive and negative, they did during the campaign and in the early months of his administration. The population these charitable efforts are aimed at and stand to benefit is the poor. It is interesting to note that Republicans started talking about the poor just as the Democrats backed away to embrace "working families." How wise a long-term electoral strategy this is remains to be seen. The poor have never been a natural constituency for the Republican Party, nor do they vote reliably or in great numbers. And the poor are only intermittently on the radar screen of middle-class Americans, who may cease to pay attention if they are not directly involved in providing or receiving, once the novelty of compassionate conservatism wears off.

Meanwhile, much to the relief of economic conservatives, Bush moved forward just as resolutely with the tax cut proposals outlined in his campaign platform. Opponents of these proposals have portrayed them as the very antithesis of compassion; they argue that the cuts disproportionately favor the wealthy and endanger the already tenuous solvency of Social Security and Medicare. But Bush infuriated these critics, and the media generally, by insistently making a compassionate conservative case for the tax cuts. He brought forth waitresses and auto mechanics to talk about how the extra $600 gained from the Bush plan would help them buy groceries or pay off the car loan. Although for years now, polls have not ranked a tax cut as a high priority among Americans, Bush's proposal enjoyed a steady increase in public support in his first months in office.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At least in the early going, then, Bush demonstrated some of the qualities of persistence, psychological insight, and rhetorical flexibility that made Reagan such a successful politician, enabling him to meld the disparate beliefs of his constituents into a coherent whole. In retrospect, some of the gloom that pervaded the Republican intellectual classes during the campaign and in the aftermath of the election seems unfounded. Though doubtlessly needing to address the progressive narrowing of its electoral base, the GOP does not appear to be "obsolescent." And the claim, advanced by the *Weekly Standard* in the heat of primary season, that the party has "rotted from within" now seems an exaggeration. It may be that a talented politician who can embrace new ideas like compassionate conservatism while maintaining positions that reassure the party base (and smoothly ignoring any incompatabilities that may result) is all a party needs for electoral success. Such an approach might not have the nice coherence of the strategies proposed by conservative intellectuals. But it also lacks some of the deficiencies of those strategies, and hence may stand a better chance of achieving what the party needs — to assimilate controversial views into a more centrist politics. Republicans have been asking the right questions; to the surprise of many, Bush has offered some persuasive answers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democracy Out of Balance

Civil Society Can't Replace Political Parties

By IVAN DOHERTY

MAX WEBER ONCE REFERRED to political parties as "the children of democracy," but in recent years civil society, in the new and emerging democracies, has often become the favored child of international efforts to assist democracy. Civil society has been described as the "wellspring of democracy," a romantic, if perhaps exaggerated, claim. The international community has promoted civic organizations, assisted them, and supported their expansion and development, often building on the ruins of discredited political parties. This has been a good and necessary endeavor. Yet the almost exclusive focus on civil society has moved beyond fashion. For some it has become an obsession, a mantra.

Increasingly, resources are being channeled to programs that develop civil society to the exclusion of political parties and political institutions such as parliaments. Many private and public donors feel that it is more virtuous to be a member of a civic organization than a party and that participating in party activity must wait until there is a certain level of societal development. There is a grave danger in such an approach. Strengthening civic organizations, which represent the demand side of the political equation, without providing commensurate assistance to the political organizations that must aggregate the interests of those very groups, ultimately damages the democratic equilibrium. The neglect of political parties, and parliaments, can

---

Ivan Doherty is the director of political party programs at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and is a former general secretary of the Fine Gael Party in Ireland.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

undermine the very democratic process that development assistance seeks to enhance. Without strong political parties and political institutions that are accountable and effective, that can negotiate and articulate compromises to respond to conflicting demands, the door is effectively open to those populist leaders who will seek to bypass the institutions of government, especially any system of checks and balances, and the rule of law.

The civil society boom

In the 1980s and '90s, civil society became the fashionable focus of attention as the changing political landscape created new opportunities for civic groups in countries emerging from dictatorial regimes. This newfound infatuation with civil society can be attributed to a number of factors: the critical role played by civil society — before real political parties could legally operate — in leading the charge against totalitarian regimes in Asia and Eastern Europe; the early adverse reaction to political parties by citizens who had experienced single-party systems in many of these countries; and the reaction of those offering support from established democracies who were themselves disillusioned with party systems and were more comfortable placing their hopes in civil society as a means of political and social renewal.

Those who embrace the development of civil society as a means of apolitical involvement in the internal politics of a country fail to recognize the limitations of such an approach. In the first instance, civil society groups in new and emerging democracies constantly grapple with what are intrinsically political issues. For example, in the context of monitoring an electoral process or advocating for improved living standards, political parties remain the primary vehicle for political action and the enactment of laws; without engaging them in the process, there can only be limited advancement. Avoiding the issue of partisan politics in the rush to strengthen civil society runs the risk of undermining representative politics and failing to exploit the real avenues to political influence open to civil society.

Examples abound of countries with a strong and active civil society where the weakness or entrenchment of political parties serves to put the entire democratic system in jeopardy. In Bangladesh, despite an abundance of advocacy and citizen action groups, the recurring partisan political stalemate consigns the country and its citizens to abject poverty. Having moved from military dictatorship to popularly elected governments on a number of occasions over the past decade, it would appear that some political leaders have learned very little. Both of the main political forces in Bangladesh have contributed to the continuing political impasse. The influence wielded by many political leaders over supporters and citizens is constantly used for narrow partisan purposes, while civil society stands helplessly on the sidelines. Also, the tendency to promote divisions in civil society indicates recognition of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

real threat a united and independent civil society poses to those who wish to undermine the democratic system or subvert it. Without movement in the area of political party reform and the creation of a more open and transparent parliamentary system, the fate of democracy and the welfare of the Bangladeshi people will continue to be threatened.

In Morocco, thousands of NGOs and advocacy groups have been active for many years, but the gradual movement towards democratic politics came about as a result of changes to the constitution allowing the results of elections to be properly reflected in the formation of the government. Following an election in 1998, for the first time, political parties that received the majority of votes were invited to form a government. As a consequence, parties that were considered to be "anti-establishment" and had been in opposition for almost 50 years came to power, ushering in a new era that aspired to a more open and democratic political system. While civil society played a central role in bringing about these changes, it was the commitment of the parties and their leaders that gave them effect. The willingness of political leaders to play a constructive role when conditions were not ideal came at a critical juncture in Morocco's history. While Morocco is only in the early stages of a democratic transition and the outcome is not assured, the maturity displayed by political leaders during those initial first steps has laid an important foundation.

Civil society groups in new and emerging democracies constantly grapple with what are intrinsically political issues.

Almost immediately, the political parties sought assistance from the international community in coping with their new political climate. They recognized the necessity of making parliament more democratic and the new government more responsive. Parties were inexperienced in building and maintaining real coalitions and in properly engaging civil society in the process of representative politics. Equally, there was an acknowledgement that these changes could and would remove parties from government just as it had given them a mandate. Through all of these developments, civil society played a critical role in raising the public awareness of the many remaining obstacles to greater participation in the democratic process. In fact, it demanded more inclusive and responsive representation. The willingness of the political parties to embrace reforms, with assistance from outside, served to create a more stable and healthy relationship between political leaders and civil society.

Northern Ireland is another example of a well-developed and financed civil society that failed to fill the vacuum created by deadlocked political forces. For decades, the province of Ulster was racked by internal conflict, its communities bitterly divided and the role of its elected politicians severely curtailed. Responsibility for providing many of the services normally provid-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ed by local government fell to NGOs and other community groups through committees often referred to as "quangos" — such bodies are formally classified as nondepartmental public bodies, or NDPBs. These bodies comprised nonelected officials and their power came from central government with little or no accountability to the citizens. They received public funding and carried out valuable work in communities across the province. While political leaders grappled with seemingly insurmountable sectarian divisions, and the rule of law gave way to violence and terrorism, progress could not be made until accommodations could be reached which recognized the diverse aspirations of both Nationalist and Unionist communities. These accommodations were achieved through negotiations between political leaders and with the support of civil society. There can be no doubt that the role of civil society was a critical element in reaching a consensus, but without the full engagement of the political parties no agreement would have been reached. The eventual agreement on self-government (Good Friday 1998) through a power-sharing arrangement was endorsed by almost 70 percent of the electorate in a referendum and included a role for civil society through the establishment of a "civic forum," which will act as a consultative mechanism on social, economic, and cultural issues.

Without the full engagement of the political parties no agreement would have been reached.

In similar examples across the world — from Chile and the Philippines in the 1980s to Indonesia and Serbia in the '90s — the combined and complementary efforts of political parties and civil society have reclaimed democracy for many citizens. In almost all cases, it may prove easier and more comfortable for the international community to provide support and encouragement for civil society while engaging in only limited interaction with political parties. However, while any transition to democracy requires popular mobilization, so too does it require constitutional and institutional frameworks. The initial mobilization may be best orchestrated by civil society, but political parties are the only actors who can provide the required institutional framework.

It is not that political parties in fledgling democracies are completely bereft of international support. In the United States, the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute, with support from the National Endowment for Democracy and the Agency for International Development, provide technical assistance and advice to democratic parties worldwide. Both institutes have also supported the development of civic organizations, particularly their engagement in the political process. Elsewhere, similar efforts have been undertaken by the publicly funded Westminster Foundation for Democracy in Great Britain and foundations affiliated with political parties in Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands. This support to parties, however, has been dwarfed by large-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scale resources provided to civic organizations and state institutions by donor aid agencies, international financial institutions, and private foundations. This imbalance in assistance has the unintended consequences of devaluing and marginalizing the foundations of representative democracy: political parties and the legislatures within which they operate. During times of crisis, a political vacuum can be created, inviting direct entreaties to the populace at large. Political parties are not perfect, but no other national institution can serve as well to impede the emergence of autocratic leaders or government by fiat.

Too often, technical assistance to political parties is available very late in the process and in such a meager form as to have little impact on long-term development. It often concentrates on campaign techniques, which are indeed always the most pressing challenge facing new and weak political parties. Fledgling parties continually struggle to mount effective campaigns and meet the expectations of a newly informed electorate. The greater challenge comes in the postelection period, when the consolidation of the political party system poses far greater challenges for party leaders. And here there is typically very little assistance or support from the international community. In the rush to hold elections, parties often fail to address institutional development issues until the electoral contests are over. Afterward, they may be forced to come to terms with a new political landscape requiring them to concentrate on building democratic institutions. At a critical stage in the early development and consolidation of the parties, the leaders and many key officials are drawn into the government and legislative process, thereby allowing their nascent parties to atrophy. Many parties are ill-prepared for the demands of both government and opposition, and are unable to adequately satisfy the expectations of citizens. This only exacerbates public cynicism.

Party failures

In emerging democracies worldwide, political parties are either too weak, too personalistic, too constrained by oppressive governments, or too corrupt and out of touch to earn the respect and support of the public. In Romania, for example, the former communists remained in government for a number of elections until a coalition of opposition parties from across the political spectrum came to power in 1996. The "reform" parties won in a landslide, taking control of both houses of parliament and winning the presidency. Through inexperience and poor interparty relations, the new government quickly became paralyzed, eroding its support base only to be replaced at the next election four years later. A similar scenario could be playing out in Slovakia now. From Russia to Venezuela and Peru to Pakistan, when countries experience political crisis, it is often the troubled state of political parties that lies at the heart of the problem.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anxieties about the state of democracy in Russia are clearly linked to the absence of strong and democratic political parties. Ten years after the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia has produced political parties that are either strong or democratic but, regrettably, not many parties that are both. As Michael McFaul has noted in his review of the six groups that won seats in the Duma in 1999, two are not parties and two are not democratic. The two that are arguably democratic political parties committed to liberal principles and the rule of law together won 14.5 percent of the vote and 49 of 450 seats in the legislature. Political parties in Russia are weak because powerful politicians have deliberately set out to make them so. President Yeltsin was opposed to political parties and saw no advantage in joining one when he left the Soviet Communist Party. Though he won two elections himself, he never sought to build an organization based on an enduring program and constituency. His successor, Vladimir Putin, is not a member of any party, though a group supporting him won 25 percent in the Duma elections. He is currently proposing legislation that will curtail the activities of political parties.

Political parties in Russia are weak because powerful politicians have deliberately set out to make them so.

Indonesia is also emerging from an authoritarian past into the unknown realms of a competitive multiparty system. Where a handful of compliant political parties had existed under the old regime, the new political order brought a myriad of parties of all shapes and sizes onto the political landscape. A total of 48 parties satisfied the new registration criteria, while a further 93 failed to qualify. Following the 1999 election, less than 15 political parties are represented in parliament, the largest with only 30 percent of the seats. In the postelection negotiations, Abdurrahman Wahid was elected president by parliament, even though his party held only 51 seats in the assembly, while the favorite, Megawati Sukarnoputri, whose party held 154 seats, was offered the vice presidency. The political situation in Indonesia is still unstable, with very few of the parties having succeeded in coming to terms with the new political climate, and all of them failing to adequately represent those who gave them support in the election. Democratization is at a very delicate stage in Indonesia, with much to be done in terms of strengthening the political parties. At the same time, it is imperative that citizens participate in the process and that parties become more representative of society and responsive to its needs.

There are also a number of countries where political parties have actually lost their mandate to function through their own mismanagement of the political system. In Pakistan, for example, political parties effectively frittered away their credibility to the point where the military's overthrow of the established political order, in October 1999, was accepted, if not wel-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comed. It certainly is a cause of grave concern and underscores the crisis in political parties when a coup d'etat is regarded by many as an acceptable solution to undemocratic and unresponsive political parties.

Venezuela provides another illustration of what happens in the absence of a credible party system. The current president tried (and failed) to take control of the country by force in 1992, but yet went on to establish himself as an acceptable alternative to a party system which had proven itself weak and ineffectual. He was elected president in 1999. Since the end of dictatorship in 1959, a two-party system representing Social Democrats and Christian Democrats had dominated politics in Venezuela. Both parties eventually lost touch with the electorate, showed scant regard for the poor and underprivileged, and failed to tackle increasing corruption in their ranks. They became discredited in the eyes of citizens, enabling Hugo Chavez to emerge from the political vacuum promoting an image of an honest military man above politics — a man willing to take radical action against a corrupt "establishment." Since his election, Chavez has moved to further centralize executive power in his hands by amending the constitution. In his defense of these measures, he argues that he is seeking to provide for "direct democracy" because of the failure of "representative democracy." Having dispensed with the traditional political parties, he has turned to the dismemberment of civil society, starting with the country's trade unions.

There are also many countries where political parties are banned and repressed, and while much has been made of the lack of political party pluralism, there are no simple answers as to how support can be offered to democrats in these countries. Any traces of political activity carry grave dangers for those involved in countries such as China, Burma, Belarus, and Cuba. In June 2000, Uganda held a referendum to decide whether political parties may participate in elections there, after effectively being banned for more than two decades. The referendum confirmed the so-called "no party" system. President Museveni has undertaken a controversial attempt to conduct politics without political parties, claiming that they ferment ethnic hostility and discord. Yet it does not seem like a solution simply to ban political parties — because the result looks very much like a one-party system in which most effective political competition is squelched.

Working together

THE GLOBAL DEMOCRATIC revolution of the past decade has demonstrated that people regard democracy as a necessity and a right in and of itself, and not merely an aspiration to be balanced against or even overshadowed by other national or economic interests. Truly open and democratic systems of government are not a threat to individual or communal welfare, but rather provide the means by which a nation can attain its full potential, both economically and politically. Democracy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

requires working democratic structures: legislatures that represent the citizenry and oversee the executive; elections in which voters actually choose their leaders; judiciaries steeped in the law and independent of outside influences; a system of checks and balances within society; and institutions and leaders that are accountable to the public.

The active support and collaboration of strong, inclusive political parties in partnership with a vibrant civil society must gain acceptance as the correctly balanced equation to achieve a more transparent and participatory system of government. In strengthening democratic institutions in new or transitioning democracies, it is not a matter of having to choose between building a strong civil society or strengthening political parties and political institutions such as parliaments. The real challenge is to balance support for democratic institutions and organizations that are more accountable and inclusive, while at the same time continuing to foster and nurture the development of a broadly based and active civil society.

Political parties form the cornerstone of democratic society and serve a function unlike any other institution in a democracy. In a 1998 article in the *Journal of Democracy*, "The Indispensability of Political Parties," Seymour Martin Lipset writes that "a democracy in a complex society may be defined as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office — that is, through political parties." The role of a political party is to aggregate and then represent social interests, providing a structure for political participation. They act as a training ground for political leaders who will eventually assume a role in governing society. In addition, parties contest and seek to win elections in order to manage government institutions.

Political parties nominate candidates, organize political competition, unify portions of the electorate, and translate policy preferences into public policies. When out of power, they provide a constructive and critical opposition by presenting themselves as the alternative government voters may wish to choose — thus pressuring the incumbents to be more responsive to the public's interests. Organized political parties serve two fundamental purposes. First, they define and express a group's needs in a way that the public and political system can understand and respond to. Second, they develop common ideas among a significant group in order to exert pressure upon the political system. Principled differences of opinion — and the tolerance of diversity and dissent that this implies — are an important part of the democratic process. The expression of conflicting viewpoints can actually help to create a better understanding of the issues and to identify solutions. When the political system functions, these exchanges lead to the attainment of new insights or workable compromises essential to the existence of a democratic system. In short, they produce tangible results.

For its part, civil society also constitutes an integral component of a dem-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ocratic system. Democracy cannot endure unless it is underpinned by a strong civic culture and supported by a populace that is committed to such ideals as the rule of law, individual liberty, freedom of religion, free and open debate, majority rule and the protection of minorities. A dynamic civil society fosters many elements essential for democracy: participation, accountability, and sustainable political reform, to name but a few. An organized civil society gives a voice to the underprivileged (as well as the privileged) and amplifies their influence in the political process. Nongovernmental organizations play a critical role in developed and developing countries. They contribute to the shaping of policy by making technical expertise available to policy formulators and by exerting pressure on governments and political institutions. They encourage citizen participation and promote civic education. They provide leadership training and opportunities for the young and the marginalized and act as a vehicle for their participation in civic life when working through political parties may not be the best option.

Much of the momentum for real and lasting reform of political systems is often found outside of government, but no one sector can claim the monopoly in this area. Governments, political parties and civil society must work together to deliver on political and democratic reform. Civil society is not and can never be a substitute for political parties or for responsible, progressive political leadership. It should never be a case of civil society *instead of* political parties, but rather civil society as a necessary complement to parties. The idea of choosing between civil society groups and political parties is a false one. Political parties and civil society are natural allies. Political parties can do much more than any other sector (including government) to further incorporate civil society into politics, so it is important (both for the quality of democracy and for their own political vitality) that parties encourage outreach activities. Civic groups should not become an arm of any particular party, as this would undermine their autonomy, but partnerships on issues of common interest can be developed. Where parties reach out and engage civic groups and cooperate with them on specific issues and reforms, parties will become stronger institutionally and will be held in higher esteem by citizens. While a healthy tension will always exist between both forces, this tension should be accompanied by a mutual respect of the vital roles played by each other.

The politics of democracy

CENTRALIZED DECISION making and the lack of well-institutionalized rules and procedures have eroded public support and discouraged participation in political party activity. An unwillingness to undertake greater citizen outreach and consultation has diminished the public's support, while the transformation of campaigning through the mass media has tended to favor "sound bites" over substance.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Polls, focus groups, and voting behavior indicate that in every region of the world, large segments of society view political parties as ineffective and out of touch with their needs. Established parties have experienced an aging and dwindling membership, and young people are hesitating to join or become associated with parties. At the same time, support has risen for independent candidates, special interest parties, and antiparty movements. The new age of mass media and technology has had two effects: diminishing the role of parties in disseminating political information and highlighting cases of scandals and partisan corruption. Political parties have been forced to address these weaknesses and the lack of credibility in a variety of ways. These include placing greater emphasis on issues of ethics in public office, modernizing and democratizing party structures to allow for greater participation, and promoting greater openness and transparency in the operation of government and political systems generally.

Leaders worldwide must rededicate themselves to the renewal of political parties and political party systems.

A new approach is required, one in which political leaders worldwide rededicate themselves to the renewal and reform of political parties and political party systems. International democracy assistance organizations must support these efforts and make much needed resources available in the form of technical assistance and expertise. Recently, the three largest international groupings of political parties — representing Social Democratic, Liberal, and Christian Democratic ideologies — are joining forces to promote political party development. With a combined membership of 350 parties in more than 140 countries, these "political internationals" can develop standards to assist the efforts of parties to reform their structures and operations.

The democratization of political parties must be a priority in the efforts to restore public confidence in parties and the democratic process as a whole. Greater citizen participation, accountability of leadership, transparency, and institutional safeguards are more important now than ever for this democratization effort to succeed. Organizations and institutions that have the commitment and expertise to underpin and promote these initiatives lack adequate resources to do so at present. Equally, the modest efforts currently being undertaken can be undermined by a lack of support from those international organizations engaged in the global democratization effort. This support is not just a matter of financial resources, but also of keener recognition of the critical role of political parties and their leaders. For example, the international financial institutions and aid agencies often promote and finance important dialogue between governments and civil society organizations on key national and local development issues. Party representatives and lawmakers should be included in this effort.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Civil society is not to blame for the decline in political parties, and neither are those who promote increased support for citizen participation outside of the party system. On the other hand, one should not take any comfort from the current crisis, as the decline of political parties ultimately threatens the foundations of democracy.

For decades, it was believed that economic development aid by donor countries could achieve the kind of economic growth and opportunity that would lead to social stability in the developing world. But even when successful, the emphasis on *economic* growth often lost momentum because it was not accompanied by *political* growth. It became increasingly apparent that an ever-growing number of problems in the developing world were beyond the reach of traditional economic aid. While they have economic consequences, the problems are not predominately economic in nature — they are intrinsically political. Truly, so-called sustainable development requires the capacity to resolve problems without resorting to violence or repression.

Over the past 10 years, there has been a sea change of attitudes by the donor community and international financial institutions that came to recognize that democratic political systems and free-market economies are two parts of the same process, sustaining each other. Where guarantees of individual rights within society do not exist, the inevitable result is exploitation, corruption, stratification, disorder, and the inability to compete — particularly in a more democratic and competitive world. In fact, rural dislocation, environmental degradation, and defective agricultural policies that lead to famine and strife all trace to political systems in which the victims have no voice, in which government institutions feel no obligation to answer to the people, and in which special interests feel free to exploit resources without fear of oversight or the need to account.

There must now be a call to action by the community of democracies to put political party development internationally on an equal footing with programs that nurture civil society. This endeavor will reinforce the values we share and serve our strategic interests. After all, a more democratic world is a more humane, peaceful, stable, and prosperous place.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Spring 2001

Trading in Futures

Getting Hegemony Right
G. John Ikenberry

A Choice of Europes
David Calleo

Their Gilded Age–and Ours
Fouad Ajami

Contending Schools
Charles William Maynes

Mugabe, Mbeki, and the Shadow of Mandela
R.W. Johnson

China and the Historians
Charles Horner

Southeast Asia Goes South
Peter Hartcher

Blair's "Ethical" Policy
Robin Harris

The Anglosphere Illusion
Owen Harries

Also:
Jonathan Clarke on Neoconservatives, *Thomas Goltz* on Robert Kaplan, *Henry Rowen* on Non-proliferation, *Ray Takeyh* on Islamism, *George Walden* on Atrocities

SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR ONE YEAR (4 ISSUES–$26) AND RECEIVE OUR SPECIAL ISSUE, *THE STRANGE DEATH OF SOVIET COMMUNISM,* FREE!

Charge my: ❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard ❑ AmEx

❑ Enclosed is my check or money order

❑ Bill me

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Zip_____

Card no._____ exp._____

Signature_____ Date_____

Send payment to: The National Interest, P.O. Box 622, Shrub Oak, NY, 10588-0622, USA; Tel: 914-962-6297. PR0301

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How to Build A Better Teacher

By ROBERT HOLLAND

AMERICAN SCHOOLS need more teachers. American schools need better teachers. Practically everyone with a stake in the education debate agrees with those two premises. However, there is sharp disagreement as to whether more regulation or less is the way to go.

The differences of perspective begin over just how vital to transmitting knowledge a teacher is. No one is more certain about the overriding importance of a teacher in a child's academic progress than Tennessee statistician William Sanders, who has developed a value-added instrument that might revolutionize how good teachers are found and rewarded for productive careers. Speaking before the metropolitan school board in Nashville in January, Sanders risked friendly fire when he disputed the connection much of the education world makes between poverty and low student performance: "Of all the factors we study — class size, ethnicity, location, poverty — they all pale to triviality in the face of teacher effectiveness."

That flies in the face of a widespread conviction in the education world that poverty is such a powerful depressant on learning that even the greatest teachers may only partially overcome its effects. As Diane Ravitch documents in her recent book *Left Back* (Simon & Schuster), education "progressives" long have believed that many children shouldn't be pushed to

---

Robert Holland is a senior fellow at the Lexington Institute, a public-policy think tank in Arlington, Va.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

absorb knowledge beyond their limited innate capacities; that they are better off with teachers who help them get in touch with their feelings and find a socially useful niche.

But Sanders has volumes of data to back up his contention. While at the University of Tennessee, he developed a sophisticated longitudinal measurement called "value-added assessment" that pinpoints how effective each district, school, and teacher has been in raising individual students' achievement over time. His complex formula factors out demographic variables that often make comparisons problematic. Among other things, he found that students unlucky enough to have a succession of poor teachers are virtually doomed to the education cellar. Three consecutive years of first quintile (least effective) teachers in Grades 3 to 5 yield math scores from the thirty-fifth to forty-fifth percentile. Conversely, three straight years of fifth quintile teachers result in scores at the eighty-fifth to ninety-fifth percentile.

Sanders found that students unlucky enough to have a succession of poor teachers are virtually doomed to the education cellar.

The state of Tennessee began using value-added assessment in its public schools in 1992, and Sanders is in demand in many other states where legislators are considering importing the system. The "No Excuses" schools identified by an ongoing Heritage Foundation project — high-poverty schools where outstanding pupil achievement defies stereotypes about race and poverty — buttress Sanders' contention that the quality of teaching is what matters most. Consider, for instance, Frederick Douglass Academy, a public school in central Harlem that has a student population 80 percent black and 19 percent Hispanic. The *New York Times* recently reported that all of Frederick Douglass's students passed a new, rigorous English Regents exam last year, and 96 percent passed the math Regents. The Grades 6-12 school ranks among the top 10 schools in New York City in reading and math, despite having class sizes of 30 to 34.

And what makes the difference? "Committed teachers," said principal Gregory M. Hodge — teachers, he said, who come to work early, stay late, and call parents if children don't show up for extra tutoring. The disciplined yet caring climate for learning set by Hodge and principals of other No Excuses schools also is due much credit.

Those who believe in deregulation of teacher licensing see in value-added assessment a potential breakthrough. Principals (like Hodge) could hire and evaluate their teachers not necessarily on the basis of credit-hours amassed in professional schools of education but in terms of objective differences instructors make when actually placed before classrooms of children. The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation published in April 1999 a manifesto on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teacher quality that argues strongly for a "results-based accountability system," disaggregated by teacher, along the lines of what Sanders has devised.

However, much of the education establishment — those in and around education school faculties nationwide, the professional development specialists at teacher unions and associations, state and local boards of education, and education specialists in much of the foundation world — takes a very different view. They argue that what is needed is much more centralized control of teacher preparation and licensing to ensure that teachers are better and more uniformly qualified when they enter the classroom. They propose to ensure this by placing professional licensing under the aegis of a single accreditation body, one that would be controlled to a great extent by the teachers themselves — or, more precisely, their national unions.

Which side prevails in this dispute over how to get the best teachers into schools — the Sanders model of ongoing evaluation of effectiveness or the establishment preference for centralized credentialing — may tell us more than anything else about the quality of instruction American pupils and their parents can expect from their schools for a generation. This is the key battleground in public education today.

Teacher certification: A primer

THE ONE POINT on which both camps agree is that the existing system of teacher certification badly needs reform. Hence, a brief survey of that system may be helpful. Currently, state departments of education and collegiate schools of education are the gatekeepers to teaching careers in America's public schools. This is a collaboration dedicated to the use of government power to standardize and centralize education, or, in the economists' term, "regulatory capture." Government licensing agencies that are charged with protecting the public interest are effectively controlled by the interests — in this case, the teacher-trainers — they are supposed to be regulating.

As a result, an aspiring teacher typically must complete a state-approved program of teacher education that is heavy on how-to-teach or pedagogical courses. All 50 states require new teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree, and all 50 require course work in pedagogy. In some states, the teacher's degree must be in education, while other states require an academic major but specify that within that degree there must be a considerable number of education courses (about a semester's worth) and also a period of student teaching (another semester). In addition, many teacher colleges tack on additional training requirements, so that fulfilling requirements for the study of pedagogy can consume well over a year of college. Most states require prospective teachers to pass one or more subject-area tests, but these often ask for regurgitation of nostrums taught by education professors.

Critics of the schools of pedagogy are legion. Seventy years ago, H.L.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mencken (never one to mince words) asserted that most pedagogues "have trained themselves to swallow any imaginable fad or folly, and always with enthusiasm. The schools reek with this puerile nonsense."

In the early 1990s, Rita Kramer took a nationwide tour of leading schools of education, from Teachers College at Columbia to the University of Washington, and reported in *Ed School Follies* on the intellectual emptiness of teacher preparation — hours spent on how to teach Tootles the Locomotive with the proper attitude, but precious little depth in history, mathematics, science, or literature. Recently Heather Mac Donald took a close look at ed schools for *City Journal* and summed up teacher educators' dogma in the phrase "Anything But Knowledge." She found teachers of teachers still holding fast to the doctrine laid out in 1925 by Teachers College icon William Heard Kilpatrick: Schools should instill "critical thinking" in children instead of teaching them facts and figures, which (he surmised) they could always look up for themselves as they became "lifelong learners." Today, Teachers College mandates courses in multicultural diversity and has students act out ways to "usurp the existing power structure."

The best and brightest students have already defected to other disciplines.

Jerry Jesness, a special education teacher in a south Texas elementary school, observes that "every profession has its gatekeepers, the college professors who not only teach, but also sift out the slow, the lazy, and the mediocre, those unfit to practice the profession for which they are preparing. One must have intelligence, drive, and stamina, especially to get through schools of engineering, law, or medicine.

"In colleges of education, the reverse seems to be the case. After a few weeks of Ed 101, the students most possessed of those qualities begin to slip away. By the time education students begin their semester of student teaching, the best and brightest have already defected to other disciplines. Colleges and departments of education separate the wheat from the chaff, but unlike those of the other disciplines, they then throw away the wheat."

The current system does allow for a semblance of public accountability. At least in theory, citizens — by their votes for governors and state legislators, and in some states, the state education boards and superintendents of public instruction — can pressure education bureaucrats to adopt more sensible rules for preparing and employing teachers. One state in which the political process has recently yielded reform is Georgia, where Democratic Gov. Roy Barnes last year won legislative approval for eliminating seniority-based teacher tenure.

At the center of the school of thought that believes tighter national regulation is key to reform is a foundation-funded entity called the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF). NCTAF is the lat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

est incarnation of a Carnegie Corporation commission — the first was the 1986 Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession — advocating a centralized, national system of teacher licensing controlled by private organizations with stakes in the process. With North Carolina Gov. James Hunt as its chairman and Stanford education professor Linda Darling-Hammond as its director, NCTAF issued its report, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," in 1996. (The Rockefeller Foundation joined Carnegie in bankrolling the commission.) NCTAF, which stayed active to lobby for its proposals, drew raves in the press for its "action agenda" to reform the training and certifying of teachers. Little ink went toward exploring the deeper implications of nationalizing control of teaching.

NCTAF called for, among other things:

- Mandatory accreditation by an organization called the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) of all teacher-training programs in the country.
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification of more than 100,000 "master" teachers.
- Formation of "independent" professional boards in each state to set policies on teacher preparation, testing, and licensing, in tune with the nationalized policy.

In December 1999, Linda Darling-Hammond forcefully stated the case for the pro-regulatory proposition that education credentials do make a difference. "It stands to reason," she wrote, "that student learning should be enhanced by the efforts of teachers who are more knowledgeable in their field and are skillful at teaching it to others. Substantial evidence from prior reform efforts indicates that changes in course taking, curriculum content, testing, or textbooks make little difference if teachers do not know how to use these tools well and how to diagnose their students' learning needs."

The union interest

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, the nation's largest teacher union, has emerged as a leading advocate of the NCTAF model of "reforming" the system by stripping control of teacher certification from the state departments of education. The NEA touts this as "professionalization," meaning self-regulation by teachers or benign-sounding "peer review." But critics dispute how much rank-and-file teachers would be empowered. Education Consumers Clearinghouse founder John Stone, a professor of education at East Tennessee State University, believes "the parties serving up these bold proposals represent the interests that have governed teacher training and licensure all along. Since publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, teacher training and licensure have undergone

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

repeated rewrites, none of which has produced any noticeable improvements in schooling."

The NEA likes the idea of all teachers having to graduate from a teacher-training program certified by NCATE. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that NCATE has been tightly linked to the NEA since the former's founding in 1954. NCATE's director, Arthur E. Wise, also heads the NEA's 31-year-old nonprofit subsidiary, the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. Meanwhile, NEA president Robert F. Chase chairs the Executive Committee of NCATE. Furthermore, Wise sat on the national commission, NCTAF, that would grant NCATE control of all teacher accreditation that it has not been able to gain on a voluntary basis over the past 40 years.

Principals found it difficult to link any improvements in student achievement to national certification.

An important link in the pro-regulatory reformers' plan is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), an outgrowth of the 1986 Carnegie report. NBPTS subsequently received Carnegie Corporation outlays of several million dollars. In the 1990s, the federal government also began subsidizing the NBPTS heavily, at the urging of President Clinton. The board is a key element in today's strategy to centralize control of the gates to teaching. The privately operated NBPTS confers national certification on teachers who submit portfolios (videotapes of the teaching, lesson plans, samples of student work) for evaluation. The teachers also must pay a $2,300 application fee, but sometimes their school boards pay it for them.

The NBPTS purports to identify excellence through this process, but economists Dale Ballou of the University of Massachusetts and Michael Podgursky of the University of Missouri — who called "professionalization" into question after careful analysis — point out that there has been no evidence to show that students of NBPTS-certified teachers learn any more than students of other teachers. Researchers at the Consortium for Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin at Madison recently found that NBPTS-certified teachers tend to become more reflective about their teaching, but their principals found it difficult to link any improvements in student achievement to the teachers' national certification.

From the perspective of economists Ballou and Podgursky, "The activities over which the profession seeks control — accreditation of teacher education programs and teacher licensing — are well-recognized means of restricting supply," which puts upward pressure on salaries. They add there can be no doubt that teacher unions see the professionalization movement "as a means to increase salaries." For further evidence of how tightly linked some of the regulatory reform is, consider that NEA president Chase serves as a member of NCTAF, which seeks to greatly augment the powers of NCATE,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on which Chase is a major power — and all this would confer more economic muscle on the NEA.

NCTAF was remarkably successful using the rhetoric of reform to persuade business leaders and the media that its program actually was a "scathing indictment" of the system for training and certifying teachers. The *New Republic* begged to differ: "Forcing teachers," the journal's editors commented, "to attend NCATE certification programs that douse them with pedagogical blather (NCATE's 'vision of quality' seeks to promote 'equity' and 'diversity' but says nothing about academic achievement) will likely scare off math and science specialists in droves."

The NEA stepped up its campaign in spring 2000. Chase and his associates unveiled revised NCATE standards for accreditation at a Washington news conference. NCATE stated that schools of education it accredits will have to meet "rigorous new performance-based standards" in order to win NCATE accreditation.

By focusing on "candidate performance," said NCATE president Wise, the "standards represent a revolution in teacher preparation." But skeptics wonder how "revolutionary" it is to assess candidates largely according to videotaped activities, portfolios of projects, personal journals, or their compatibility with a team. That's the emphasis of the NBPTS, but portfolio assessment relies heavily on subjective judgment, as opposed to testing a teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught.

"In spite of claims to the contrary," notes Podgursky, "at present there exists no reliable evidence indicating whether or not graduates of NCATE-accredited teacher training programs are better teachers." Although several states have responded by mandating NCATE accreditation, Podgursky added, "mandatory accreditation would almost certainly restrict the supply of teachers and exacerbate teacher shortages, yet its effect on the teacher quality pool is uncertain. It may also stifle promising state-level experiments with alternative teacher certification and the entry of new teacher-training institutions into the market."

For his part, Wise claims: "As more institutions meet NCATE's national professional standards, more qualified teacher candidates will be available, since candidates from accredited institutions pass licensing examinations at a higher rate than do those from unaccredited institutions or those with no teacher preparation." Wise based that assertion on a recent Educational Testing Service (ETS) study of the rates at which teacher candidates pass the Praxis II licensing exams. However, the same study shows that the SAT and ACT scores of NCATE graduates who passed licensing exams are lower than those of non-NCATE peers. In addition, Podgursky observed that the released ETS data are so flawed as to make any comparisons problematic. For instance, 14 percent of the sample of Praxis II test-takers never enrolled in a teacher-training program — yet the researchers sorted them into NCATE categories based on the colleges they attended. The study also failed to take into account wide variations in how states test prospective teachers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The new standards condense NCATE's 1995 version of standards from 20 categories into six. Examiners will look at teacher-candidates' knowledge, skills, and "dispositions"; the school's assessment system; the inclusion of field experience and clinical practice; the institution's devotion to "diversity"; how faculty model "best practices"; and unit governance, including the wise use of information technology.

Actually, notes Professor Stone, the "new" standards implement mostly old ideas about teaching from existing standards. As for the portfolios, classroom observations, and emphasis on Praxis II, "performance on these various assessments reflects nothing more than a grasp of the same old faulty teaching practices that education professors have been espousing right along."

Most parents — the primary consumers of education — want schools to stress academic achievement, as studies by the nonpartisan Public Agenda have shown. However, as Public Agenda's surveys also reveal, many education professors believe "best practice" is a teacher not teaching, but facilitating in the progressive tradition, while children construct their own meaning, an approach called constructivism. "Social justice" is valued more highly than achievement. Arguably, that's the approach NCATE accreditation would enshrine.

As Podgursky and Ballou note in a recent Brookings Institution paper, public education already is a regulated monopoly. In most school districts, parents have little or no choice of their children's schools or teachers. In addition, unlike in medicine or other service markets, education consumers lack the protection of antitrust or malpractice lawsuits. Within this structure, the teacher unions already exercise enormous economic power as their well-organized affiliates bargain with fragmented local school boards.

If, next, teacher unions win control of the gates to teaching through their domination of such organizations as NCATE, they arguably would possess "market power not enjoyed by producers or unions in any major industry in our economy." That would not bode well for efforts to expand consumer choice and to get fresh blood into the teaching profession. Moreover, when a monopoly can restrict supply, prices will rise — in this case, teacher salaries. That would fulfill a primary objective of the teacher unions, but without any guarantee of increased quality.

Another approach

WHAT KIND OF PERSONS might be attracted to teaching were the doors to teaching careers open to people with a wide variety of backgrounds that didn't necessarily include sitting through hundreds of hours of education courses, whether NCATE-accredited or not? Suppose principals could hire their own teaching staffs without having to follow the credits-hours prescribed by education bureaucracies?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Well, there would be more teachers like Scott (Taki) Sidley, who taught English at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., the past three years, but ran athwart the state bureaucracy's insistence that he take additional prescribed courses in order to be "certified." In a piece of Sunday commentary in the *Washington Post* (June 25, 2000), long-time teacher Patrick Welsh lamented the "bureaucratic narrow-mindedness" that pushes people like Sidley out of teaching.

Welsh noted that Sidley, a University of Virginia graduate who has served in the Peace Corps, won acclaim from students and parents and was considered "one of our [T.C. Williams'] finest teachers." But he must leave the young people he was teaching so well because he lacks on his resume 30 credit-hours that regulators insist he must have — one being a low-level composition course, even though he took 48 graduate hours in creative writing at U.Va. and the university exempted him from introductory composition because of his Advanced Placement English score in high school.

Many charter schools freely hire teachers who know their subjects but haven't been through the education-school mill.

Many young teachers like Sidley, Welsh notes, "see the petty adherence to the certification rules as symptomatic of a pervasive problem." For an alternative vision, he quoted Dave Keener, head of the school's science department and the 1998 Virginia winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching: "The process of getting the best has to be streamlined. Individual high schools should be given the power to advertise positions and do their own recruiting. . . . Principals, with advice of teachers, should be able to do all the hiring on the spot without having to get approval from the central office, which often takes weeks. De-emphasize the education courses. Once we get the kind of people we want, we could train them in the schools."

That's the sensible approach that one kind of education reform, the charter school, facilitates. Organizers of charter schools — often teachers with a common vision — receive waivers from certification and other bureaucratic rules. In exchange for independence, they agree to be accountable for academic results. Many charter schools freely hire teachers who know their subjects but haven't been through the education-school mill. Only a small fraction of charter school teachers choose to belong to the national teacher unions.

In its 1996 report, NCTAF gave the impression with its sharp attack on the current state-controlled certification system that it wanted a thoroughgoing reform that would bring bright young teachers into the classroom. But as Professors Ballou and Podgursky observe, NCTAF focuses not on recruiting more talented individuals but on beefing up the system of teacher train-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing — and shifting its control from political bodies to organizations, like NCATE, that may also reflect private agendas, such as the NEA's.

There are a few small-scale programs designed to deepen the pool of teaching talent by going outside the certification routine. One is Teach for America, which places liberal arts graduates in high-need urban and rural districts. Another is Troops to Teachers, which assists retiring military personnel in becoming teachers. In both instances, the newly minted teachers obtain provisional certification and then work toward obtaining enough professional education credits to gain full certification.

New Jersey is one state that has taken seriously the desirability of offering alternative routes to teaching. In 1984, the state reduced the number of education courses required for traditional certification, while putting new teachers under the tutelage of a mentor teacher. At the same time, it allowed teachers to recruit liberal arts graduates who hadn't been through education schools at all. These teachers were also put under the supervision of a mentor. They would get on-the-job training in applied teaching. The new approach has resulted in higher scores on licensing tests, a lower attrition rate, and a more diverse teaching force, notes former New Jersey Education Commissioner Leo Klagholz in a Fordham Foundation paper.

Such programs are fine as far as they go — but they don't go nearly far enough nationwide. Strict regulation of K-12 teaching has yielded pervasive mediocrity. It is time to deregulate and to emphasize results. Instead of screening teachers according to courses taken and degrees earned, school administrations should free principals to hire the most intellectually promising material — English majors to teach English, history majors to teach history — and then let the schools assimilate them in the nitty-gritty of preparing lesson plans and monitoring lunchrooms.

Value-added assessment

THE QUEST FOR reform based on proof of good teaching brings us back to William Sanders and the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), which generates annual reports of gains in student achievement produced by each teacher, school, and school district. Progress is broken down by core subject, and gains are compared to national, state, and local benchmarks.

Professor John Stone explains the significance of using such a system:

> By comparing each student's current achievement to his or her past performance and aggregating the results, value-added assessment statistically isolates the impact of individual teachers, schools, and school systems on the average progress of the students for which they are responsible. Not incidentally, value-added assessment can also be used by education's decision-makers to isolate and assess the effectiveness of everything from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> the latest curricular innovations, to the preparedness of novice teachers, to the quality of the programs in which teachers were trained.

Here, in short, is a real-world way to assess the performance of teachers — as opposed to the paperwork realm of NCATE, which deems credentials and licensure hoops to be the equivalent of quality assurance.

The most thoroughgoing reform of teacher licensing and hiring could come through a combination of the New Jersey and Tennessee approaches. Schools could hire teachers with liberal-arts educations and/or valuable working-world experiences, then give them on-the-job mentoring, and finally evaluate their teaching prowess according to a value-added assessment.

It's known from Sanders's research, the No Excuses schools, and plain common sense that teachers make a profound difference in students' lives. Deregulated teacher hiring combined with value-added assessment could bring an infusion of fresh talent into teaching and provide a basis for rewarding those teachers who do the most to help children learn. Such a system also could quickly identify teachers who needed extra training, or those who ought to be pursuing a different line of work. Such a change would deserve to be called reform; mandatory accreditation locking in the status quo in teaching preparation does not.

Three days into his administration, President George W. Bush unveiled an accountability plan for federal education spending that sparked hope for a fresh approach to bringing good teachers to K-12 schools. He proposed that Congress revise Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act so that school districts can come up with alternative ways to certify teachers. And he would reserve a chunk of funding for grants to states that develop systems to measure teacher effectiveness according to student academic achievement.

That's value-added, and it may turn out to be the most significant education tool since chalk.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Introducing a new journal of statesmanship and political thought.

The *Claremont Review of Books* is the new flagship publication of the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy.

Why a book review, you might ask? Because it is a format that conservatives have not exploited. We think that conservatives need, persistently and farsightedly, to wage the battle of ideas at the level of ideas rather than merely at the level of particular policies, important as these are. Every month important conservative books and arguments languish, liberal tomes escape censure, and intelligent works of biography, history, politics, and literature remain unexamined.

We aim to change that.

At the same time, we intend in each issue to reflect on current contentions and help reawaken in American politics, and especially in American conservatism, a forthright devotion to the Constitution and the principles of our political tradition. We believe this essential if conservatism is to understand its own majestic purposes, as well as to become a more effective political force.

The Winter 2001 issue, available now, features an exclusive excerpt from James W. Ceaser and Andrew E. Busch's forthcoming book on the realignment election of 2000, *The Perfect Tie*. Also featured: Michael Uhlmann's defense of the Electoral College, Harry V. Jaffa on what *Crisis of the House Divided* and *A New Birth of Freedom* have in common, David Tucker on the reparations debate, Mark Gauvreau Judge on Ken Burns' *Jazz*, a symposium on what the 20th century can teach the 21st, Bernard DeVoto on how to make a proper martini, and much more. For more information, visit us on the Web at www.claremont.org.

Subscribe today.

Please subscribe me to the *Claremont Review of Books* for (check one):

❑ one year (four issues @ $19.95) *special rate: $14.95*
❑ two years (eight issues @ $34.95) *special rate: $29.95*
❑ three years (12 issues @ $54.95) *special rate: $49.95*

❑ *My check is enclosed* ❑ *Please charge my* ❑ *Visa* ❑ *Mastercard*

Card number _____ *Expiration* _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ *State* _____ *ZIP* _____

Daytime phone _____ *E-mail* _____

Claremont Review of Books

Mail to: The Claremont Institute, 250 W. First Street, Suite 330, Claremont, CA 91711
Or for more information call (909) 621-6825

crb-pr-0401

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Today's Arab Israelis, Tomorrow's Israel

By ERIC ROZENMAN

DESPERATE TO REPLACE or resuscitate the Oslo "peace process" during the miniwar last fall and winter with the Palestinians, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak reiterated his call for separation. If seven years of Israeli withdrawals from one national security "red line" after another had not bought peace, then at least separation — unilateral and quick — of Jews and Arabs, of Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, would bring quiet.

To stimulate cabinet discussion of separation, Barak distributed copies of Haifa University Professor Dan Schueftan's manifesto, *Disengagement,* to his ministers. By late December a poll showed 75 percent of Israelis (no doubt the figure would have been higher if it reflected only Jewish Israeli sentiment) favoring separation in some form or another. That meant the idea behind Barak's winning slogan in the 1999 campaign, "Us here, them there," remained popular, if Barak himself did not. Shortly before ousting Barak in February's election for prime minister, Ariel Sharon restated his own proposal for unilateral separation (though only as a response to a future unilateral declaration of statehood by the Palestinians).

Despite the renewed interest in the subject — which survives Barak's defeat — separation along the pre-1967 "green line" neither divides nor conquers. That is because, as the "al-Aksa intifada" confirmed by enlisting the participation of many Israeli Arabs and the vociferous support of even more, the Israeli-Palestinian struggle already has penetrated to within "Israel

---

Eric Rozenman is a journalist in Washington. His articles on Israel have appeared in the Middle East Quarterly.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proper." This expansion feeds on the rapid growth of Israel's Arab population and the deepening of that population's Palestinian national identification. Separation, as discussed by Israeli officials and academics, fails to deal realistically with this changed, but hardly new, paradigm.

Last fall, not only were Israelis and Palestinians killing each other across the pre-1967 green line in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and eastern Jerusalem, but Israeli Arabs and Jews also did likewise inside the 1948 boundaries. Although the numbers were small — 13 Israeli Arabs killed by Israeli police, one by a Jewish mob, and five Israeli Jews murdered by Israeli Arabs — the significance was great. The struggle that Israeli Jews had long imagined was between their superior state and an inferior Palestinian Arab movement over a West Bank/Gaza Strip entity has relapsed into its essential pre-1948 condition.

Then the Arab and Jewish inhabitants of British Mandatory Palestine west of the Jordan River (Britain unilaterally separated eastern Palestine — Transjordan — in 1922) waged an intercommunal fight for dominance. Today, they do so again, the Oslo process and favorable demographic trends having stimulated Arab appetites and solidarity on both sides of the green line. Arafat rejected Barak's unprecedented offer of 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and de facto control over eastern Jerusalem at Camp David last summer because he would have had to share Jerusalem, drop the Arab "right of return" to pre-'67 Israel, and declare the conflict over. Simultaneously, the Arabs of Israel, by supporting those of the West Bank and Gaza last fall, also reaffirmed that Jewish claims inside '48 lines are still up for grabs.

Smaller majority, larger minority

DESPITE ITS MANY successes, Israel 53 years after independence remains a Jewish beachhead in the Near East. Three-fourths of Israel's infrastructure and Jewish population lie within an L-shaped strip 75 miles from Haifa's northern suburbs to Tel Aviv's southern ones and 35 miles west to east, from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This Jewish heartland rarely exceeds nine miles in width.

As a result of Jewish immigration and Arab emigration during the first five years of Israel's founding, Jews constituted roughly 87 percent of Israel's population from 1953 through 1967. But then the consistently much higher Arab Israeli fertility rates — supplemented by a high level of Jewish emigration — began to close the gap. In 1987, the Jewish majority was down to 82 percent. And even with the massive influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early '90s, by Israel's fiftieth anniversary in 1998, the state's Jewish majority dipped to 79 percent. In the capital, Jerusalem, it fell to less than 70 percent. Overall, the country's population that year was 6,041,400; 4,785,100 Jews, 1,105,400 Arabs (899,800

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Muslims, 106,600 Christians, 99,000 Druze), and 150,800 in the "religion unclassified" and non-Arab Christian categories.

In addition to the disparity in birth and emigration rates, Israeli Arabs are much younger as a group than Israeli Jews. So before the end of this decade, it is likely that nearly one in four Israelis will be Arab. And Israeli Arabs are identifying ever more closely with the rising Palestinian nationalism of the roughly 3 million Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and eastern Jerusalem. Hence binationalism or, more precisely, the struggle between two national movements, Jewish and Arab, for sovereignty over the same territory has reemerged along both sides of the green line.

Ironically, this struggle within the Jewish state is the very thing that divestiture of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was supposed to prevent. Following the law of unintended consequences, Israel's unreciprocated Oslo concessions encouraged not only the Palestinian Arabs, but also emboldened Israel's own Arab minority.

Sociologist Sammy Smouha found that the percentage of Israeli Arabs willing to identify themselves as such dropped from 63 in 1995 to 33 in 1999; the percentage willing to fly an Israeli flag on Independence Day declined from 43 to 28. In 2000, a poll by *Yediot Aharonot* showed 66 percent of Israeli Arabs asserting they would support the Palestinians in any confrontation with Israel; only 13 percent would support their own country. Early this March, after five months of "intifada II," a Tel Aviv University survey indicated that more than 71 percent of Israeli Jews see Yasser Arafat as a terrorist, but only 8 percent of Israeli Arabs do.

Hence the shudder that ran through Israel's Jewish population early in October when Arab Israelis blocked roads, hurled stones and Molotov cocktails, and chanted "death to the Jews" in solidarity with Palestinian Arabs doing likewise in the West Bank and Gaza. Yosef Goell wrote in the *Jerusalem Post* that "the really bad news of the latest uprising [is that] the overwhelming majority of Israeli Arabs — first and foremost their 10 Knesset members — made not the slightest effort to rein in the rioters. They were either too spineless — terrorized by anti-Israeli radicals in the streets of nearly all Arab towns and villages — or secretly proud of the rioters while too cowardly to join them."

Some not secretly. Interviewed on Palestinian Authority television after intifada II began, Israeli Arab Knesset member Abdel Malek Dehamshe said, "we exaggerate when we say 'peace' [with Israel]. . . . What we are speaking about is '*hudna*' [a temporary ceasefire]."

Early in October, a public opinion survey of Israeli Jews found a large majority concurring that Arab violence inside the green line was more dangerous than the al-Aksa intifada across it. Seventy-four percent of Jewish Israeli respondents said that Israeli Arab behavior — demonstrations, rioting, assaults — during the first week of the Palestinian insurrection amounted to treason.

Israel has promised more attention and more government money to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country's comparatively neglected "Arab sector," perhaps on the model of President Lyndon Johnson directing federal largess to America's inner cities following the race riots of the late 1960s. The analogy does not withstand scrutiny, however. Regardless of abiding American differences over race, black and white Americans overwhelmingly share the same mother tongue, salute the same flag, serve in the same military, and share the same religion. Virtually no African Americans, however embittered, sympathize with, let alone support, foreign movements dedicated to the overthrow of the United States. None of this can be said about Israeli Arabs and their relationship to the country as a Jewish state. In these fundamental ways, they are brethren not of their Israeli neighbors, but of their Palestinian Arab relatives just a few kilometers away.

Post-Oslo Israel appears to many of its Arab citizens as a small, weakening nation surrounded by the infinitely larger, more populous, more patient Arab world, of which they are a part. Frustrated, war-weary Israeli Jews fear they might be right. Thus, both the appeal of separation and the security-minded Sharon's victory.

"Palestinianized" Israeli Arabs

BARAK EXPLAINED *hafrada* — separation — this way in 1998: "We should separate ourselves from the Palestinians physically, following the recommendation of the American poet Robert Frost, who once wrote that good fences make good neighbors. Leave them behind [outside] the borders that will be agreed upon, and build Israel."

He did not — pre-intifada II — envision a "great wall of Israel." There would be "not a fence to ensure that no one ever gets through, but rather one that people pass through according to certain regulations, and not one that allows every madman to come in with explosives." But sometimes madmen have no prior record, and carry an Israeli endorsement, like the Palestinian bus driver permitted to work in Israel during a security closure of the territories this spring. He plowed into a crowd at a bus stop, killing eight. In mid-October 2000 — with nightly Palestinian gunfire from Beit Jala striking buildings in Jerusalem's nearby southern neighborhood of Gilo — Shlomo Ben-Ami, Barak's minister for internal security (police) and acting foreign minister, explained the obvious to American Jewish representatives: "If we don't have peace with the Palestinians, there will be tremendous instability. . . . We live really one within the other [and] we need to separate. It is vitally important that we reach an agreement with the Palestinians. . . . Separation will be between two political entities, Israel and Palestine." This, he added, "is the only way we can see for the Israeli Arabs to de-Palestinianize them."

How "Palestinianized" were Israeli Arabs after Oslo? Israeli Arabs began to emphasize Arab national issues, as Tel Aviv University's Elie Reches

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

noted. Many also started to demonstrate what might be called pan-Islamic sentiments. According to journalist Danny Rubinstein, Israeli Arabs have entered the competition in the Islamic world to help restore al-Aksa mosque and the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount. They have joined with donors from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, the Persian Gulf oil emirates, and Turkey. In addition to contributing funds, hundreds of volunteers journey each week from almost all over the country to work on the renovations. This trend developed years before Ariel Sharon's late September visit to the Temple Mount; it answers Jewish archaeological work just outside the Mount's south wall.

Israeli Arab opposition to Israel as a Jewish state, and growing identification with Palestinian Arab nationalism, was plain before intifada II. For example, riots by Israeli Arabs over government land appropriation in May and September 1998 involved thousands of participants and, according to a senior police official, resembled the Palestinians' first intifada. Reches explained that the Oslo process had led Israeli Arabs to focus more on "national issues inside the green line." Even reaching a settlement with the Palestinians in the territories would not eliminate the "real challenge" to Israel from its Arab citizens, he said.

Israeli Arab opposition to Israel as a Jewish state was plain before intifada II.

In early September 1999 — 13 months prior to intifada II — police arrested five Israeli Arabs for car bomb blasts in Tiberias and Haifa. The *Washington Post* reported that "the arrests seemed to substantiate concerns of Israeli intelligence officials that there could be a growing sense of alienation and extremism among some Arab citizens of Israel. An Israeli Arab was arrested last week in the killing of a Jewish couple in northern Israel."

In April 2000, the government's proposal for relocating soldiers of the Jerusalem-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) and their families to Israeli Arab towns after the pending IDF retreat from the south Lebanon security zone received a harsh reality check. "For us," said Mohammed Zeidan, chairman of the Supreme Follow-Up Committee of Israeli Arabs, "the SLA soldiers are mercenaries who betrayed their nation . . . and therefore we will conduct a public campaign against their settlement in Arab villages." Two weeks before intifada II erupted, Israeli police told journalists that they had broken up two "nationalist" cells by arresting 24 Israeli Arabs and seizing arms and ammunition. In addition to stoning Israeli police and civilian vehicles, cell members had set fire to houses of Israeli Arabs they suspected of "collaborating" with the authorities, killing three people.

In June 2000, Israeli Arab leaders organized a series of celebrations of Israel's defeat by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. Like Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, they discussed how to apply the lessons of "Hezbollah's victory" to their own situation. Knesset member

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Taleb al-Sani warned that after south Lebanon the next flash point was Israel's Negev. Should officials try to appropriate land there, "the Arabs will respond violently and loudly."

Intifada II began on September 29, and Israeli Arabs quickly joined. *Time*'s October 23, 2000, issue noted that "with the peace process falling apart, the last thing Israel needs is civil war. But that is what it almost had in its Arab neighborhoods and towns during the past two weeks." Israel's Arab minority rioted in the Galilee, where it is nearly the majority, "and in major cities like Jaffa and Haifa. Jewish mobs responded with attacks of their own. 'Coexistence between Arabs and Jews in Israel has started to collapse,' says Salah Tarif, a Druze Arab member of Barak's One Israel Party." The problem, *Time* noted, is that "Israeli Arabs tend to think of themselves as Palestinians who happen to live in Israel, not as Israelis of Arab descent."

Intifada II began on September 29, and Israeli Arabs quickly joined.

In the face of the renewed reality of violence between Jews and Arabs inside Israel, the government approved measures previously reserved for combating Palestinians. As the daily *Ha'aretz* reported early in November, "an undercover Border Police unit was used to break up a demonstration of Israeli Arabs near the village of Zeita in the north of the country. The unit was called in to assist local police after dozens of demonstrators converged near the village, throwing stones and setting fire to tires. . . . The undercover unit was deployed for the first time against Israeli Arabs in Umm al-Fahm last month."

A stronghold of the currently legal Islamic Movement, Umm al-Fahm — located in the strategic and Arab-majority Wadi Ara — was the site of repeated attacks. These included firebombs and stones thrown at Israeli cars. The deputy mayor of the town, Sheikh Taher Ali Jebarin, speaking at a Muslim rally in Austria, encouraged participation in riots against Jewish civilians and soldiers and praised the new intifada of the Palestinian people and its spread into what he called the occupation of 1948 Palestine.

Youths in the Israeli Arab town of Majd al-Kurm, one of several just across the main Akko-Tiberias highway from the Jewish city of Karmiel, stoned and firebombed traffic, including an intercity bus. After an Arab volunteer in the Israel Defense Forces, Sergeant-Major Khalil Taher, was killed by Hezbollah on the Israeli-Lebanese border on November 27, the imam of Akko — an employee of the Israeli ministry of religion — refused to officiate at his funeral.

Early in October in Nablus on the West Bank, Palestinian rioters burned the Jewish holy site of Joseph's tomb; late in October outside the Arab town of Shfaram in the Galilee, the gravesite of Rabbi Yehuda Ben-Baba, a religious shrine, was damaged badly by fire. By then, attacks on Jewish sacred places within Israel had become commonplace.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A report in the November 16 edition of *Ha'aretz* illustrated the Arab challenge to Jewish authority in the Galilee: "Police have arrested two men from the village of Arabeh . . . suspected of leading a planned attack by residents of the village on an IDF convoy participating in a training exercise on Monday night. As a result of the attack, one soldier was lightly injured and two IDF vehicles damaged." Israel Radio added, "Israeli Arabs were checking cars passing through Arabeh and assaulting cars driven by Jews."

Arab Israelis are not monolithic. But divisions among Israeli Arab leaders offer little in support of a unitary Jewish state. Knesset member Azmi Bishara — he also has served as head of the philosophy department at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank — argued last spring that "while in France or America an Arab can integrate into French or American society, in Israel, since it is impossible for an Arab to integrate into the Jewish nation, integration means marginalization."

Opposing Bishara, Knesset member Hashem Mahameed advocates full Arab integration into Israeli life. The first Arab to serve on the parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Mahameed hopes for a state in which Arabs and Jews live together harmoniously, with full and equal opportunities. Mahameed would like to see all Arab candidates for Knesset run on one party list. "Since all Arab parties agree on broad lines of reform and have the same community at heart, why should ideology separate them?"

The tactical differences between Bishara and Mahameed are real. But strategically, neither would leave Israel as a state both unified and meaningfully Jewish. Arab members in the 120-seat Knesset, although only half the proportion of Arabs in the total population, already have held the balance of power on key votes involving the future of the Jewish state: the formation of Rabin's government in 1992 and the passage of Oslo I in 1993 and of Oslo II in 1995 all lacked Jewish majorities.

Furious with the prime minister for neglect in general and the October shootings by police in particular, Israeli Arabs who voted for Barak almost unanimously in 1999 largely deserted him by staying home this year. "It would be wrong," Egypt's *Al-Ahram* weekly crowed, "to see the boycott simply as a criticism of Ehud Barak. . . . In calling for a boycott the Arab parties are effectively ending their 'historic dependence' on Barak's Labor Party. . . . 'they are ending the game of citizenship.'"

An impossible fence

ISRAELI JEWS took note. The prime minister's office and defense ministry began planning to double within five years the minority Jewish population in the troubled area of Galilee. If successful, the plan was to be a model for other Arab-majority areas in the country.

Influential left-leaning commentators also saw cause for alarm. In an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

October 5 column, Dan Margalit lamented that "Arab members of Knesset played a key role in the escalation of the violence. . . . Why, in every dispute with Arafat, do Israeli Arabs never find even one point in favor of the government of Israel? This total identification and the absence of any voices in the Israeli Arab community publicly calling for an end to the violence gives rise to the suspicion that the members of this community constitute a fifth column.

"In the face of the continuation of the violence, hope is fading that once their [economic and social] situation improves, Israeli Arabs will be satisfied. In fact, there is a growing fear that the Israeli Arab minority will want more, that it aims for autonomy within the context of the State of Israel, for a State of Palestine beyond the pre-1967 borders and for a binational state within these borders." Margalit feared an Israeli Arab "Sudetenland."

Like the Palestinians, Israeli Arabs sent their own children to the front lines of the clashes.

Arie Caspi asserted that Israeli Arabs "who went out with rocks and weapons against the Israeli police when Israeli soldiers were waging battles a few kilometers away, in effect, joined the war against us. . . . Even today the Arabs are not willing to compromise on our existence here."

Like the Palestinians, Israeli Arabs sent their own children to the front lines of the clashes, the daily *Ma'ariv* reported three days into the violence. While Israeli Arab children fought with police, Jewish schools around the country canceled class trips. The Education Ministry temporarily prohibited outdoor camping in Israel. The parliament's education committee determined that 600 Jewish schools and 8,000 kindergartens (separate facilities in much of Israel) did not have adequate security.

Not only Israeli schools were found to need more protection. At the end of October, security officials presented a list of Jewish towns inside the green line that "require additional protection against possible attacks. The list's significance is the definition of Israeli Arabs as a threat," *Ha'aretz* reported on November 1. "The list includes towns in the upper and lower Galilee, the Segev bloc and the Jezreel Valley. According to the formula developed by the security forces, these towns are located within the vicinity of 'hostile populations or in isolated areas in danger of being cut off' and were considered under threat in the wake of last month's violence."

With Israeli Arabs growing in number and in solidarity with Palestinian Arabs on their way to statehood, where will the fence that separationists have in mind run? As Foreign Minister Ben-Ami alluded, the ethnographic boundaries are neither sharp nor straight: On the embattled terrain from Lebanon to the Gulf of Aqaba, between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, 280 miles long and rarely more than 45 miles wide, Jews and Arabs "live really one within the other." Yet unless Israel means to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

separate not only east and west Jerusalem, Kfar Saba from Qalqilya, Netanya from Tulkarem but also Nazareth from Nazareth Illit, Umm al-Fahm from Hadera, Jaffa from Tel Aviv, no satisfactory borders embodying Jewish-Arab separation can be drawn.

Barak's assertion that good fences make good neighbors notwithstanding, the barrier between western and eastern Jerusalem from 1948 to 1967 — a miniature Berlin Wall dividing the city between Jordanian occupiers and the Israelis — did not do so. The concrete miniwall now separating the residents of Gilo in south Jerusalem from the nocturnal gunmen in Beit Jalla is not doing so. In any case, such obstacles will not block mortar shells like those fired into Jewish settlements in Gaza or blasted from Gaza into Israel proper in March, let alone increasingly sophisticated electronic connections.

"What really helps the Palestinians in this intifada," said Ibrahim Abu Sheikh of Arafat's Fatah faction of the PLO in late November, is the satellite channels broadcasting throughout the Arab world. And what helps the Palestinian Arabs could bolster the Israeli Arabs as well, separation notwithstanding. Nor can border fortifications prevent hacking into Israeli computer networks, another new feature of the autumn upheaval.

Border fortifications cannot prevent hacking into Israeli computer networks, another new feature of the autumn upheaval.

An item suggesting the difficulty of workable separation along a renewed green line appeared in *Hatzofe,* the paper of the National Religious Party, on October 28. Correspondent Hagai Huberman wrote, "the GSS [General Security Services, or Shin Bet — Israel's FBI] has decided that Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz cannot use the helicopter pad next to their homes in Kochav Yair because of Arab snipers. Kochav Yair is located within the green line and at the start of the recent disturbances shots were fired at the pad from the West Bank." Barak's hometown is two and a half miles from the Palestinian Arab city of Qalqilya. Qalqilya is just across the green line from the Israeli suburb of Kfar Saba and less than 10 miles from the Mediterranean. It also lies one and a quarter miles from the Israeli Arab village of Falame.

A wall separating Kochav Yair from Qalqilya — and from the Arab-Islamic world stretching eastward to Nablus, Amman, Baghdad, and Tehran — would have to be improbably high and thick. The electronic border fence erected between Israel and the Gaza Strip in 1994-95 was found to be "full of holes," *Ha'aretz* military correspondent Amos Harel reported early this year. During the first three months of the al-Aksa intifada, Palestinians "destroyed several kilometers of it," expanding gaps created before the latest violence. But even a well-maintained barrier between Palestine and Israel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would do nothing about potential snipers from Falame. And a fence cutting off Barak's home from that nearby Israeli Arab village would bring de facto apartheid to Jew and Arab alike, ghettoizing both.

International uncertainty

In their frustration over the Oslo miniwar, Israeli Jews' talk of separation also tends to ignore the rest of the world. There is no evidence that neighboring Arab countries, the European Union, or the United States would tolerate the kind of divorce Israeli Jews and their American supporters discuss among themselves. As Israeli economist Shlomo Maital noted in January, a lasting physical separation likely would cripple the Palestinian economy, provoking even greater unrest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and thereby in the Arab world. This also would intensify Israel's already dangerous international isolation and add new strains to the country's relationship with the United States. Secretary of State Colin Powell's call for Israel to transfer taxes to the Palestinian Authority as required under Oslo — even while Arafat's men directed the violence — merely hinted at the diplomatic difficulty a real, unilateral separation by Israel would spark.

To enjoy the imagined benefits of separation, Israelis would have to gird themselves for a long period of international ostracism, including possible economic harm if not sanctions. For example, foreign investment — which helped spur Israel's high-tech boom — took off only in the wake of the 1993 Oslo accords. It virtually stopped after the latest violence. Tourism, one of Israel's main industries, plunged 80 percent. Agriculture and construction, dependent in part on Palestinian Arab labor, slowed.

In the end, separation seeks to transform an "us here, them here" situation. To fence a Jewish Israel from the Arab-Islamic world along the green line, therefore, seems to imply population transfer of Jews and Arabs, or a contraction of Israel to its Jewish heartland. Neither, to understate the circumstances, seems feasible, not to mention imminent. Hence Sharon's interest in interim agreements and "nonbelligerency" with minimal Israeli interference in Palestinian-controlled territory.

Worldwide, a number of binational and multinational countries — Yugoslavia, Indonesia, the Soviet Union, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Lebanon — have collapsed or fractured. States with assertive Muslim minorities or extremist Muslim movements — the Philippines, Cyprus, Algeria, Malaysia, Macedonia — find themselves enduring permanent division or battling chronic insurrection. Sovereign power flows from even large countries to supranational agencies like the EU and to legal tribunals like the International Criminal Court. So time might be running out for Israel to firmly plant itself as the uncontested Jewish nation-state.

David Ben-Gurion once said that Israel would be established when it had

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peace with its neighbors, settled the Negev, and numbered 10 million Jews. Ariel Sharon once — but not recently — insisted that "Jordan is Palestine." Actually, modern Palestine initially was what has become Jordan, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Its peaceful separation into two established states, one Arab and one Jewish — the former no doubt with virtually no Jews, the latter with a small, accepted and accepting Arab minority — remains a distant prospect. That being the case, Sharon's actual emphasis on interim agreements, complemented one hopes with an American expectation of a post-Arafat, post-Hamas Palestinian leadership, might do as much to make good neighbors as impossibly great fences.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eisenhower at Columbia

Travis Beal Jacobs

"The Author's encylopedic research and graceful narrative speed make the book as engrossing as it is definitive in filling the gap left open by other biographers."

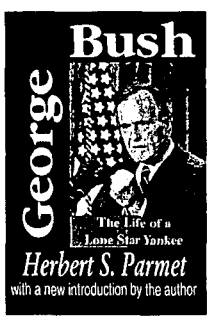
—Jacques Barzun

This insightful, well-written volume covers the years that played such a vital role in Dwight D. Eisenhower's journey to the White House. Jacobs reviews Eisenhower's appointment as chief of staff after his return from Europe following V-E Day. He examines Eisenhower's acceptance of Columbia's presidency, and the circumstances surrounding his arrival and installation. Jacobs covers Eisenhower's subsequent leave of absence and return to duty at the Pentagon as NATO commander and the impact of his extended absence from Columbia. Jacobs recounts the hostility of campus liberal intellectuals who had increasingly resented Eisenhower's presidency and were offended by the *New York Times*'s endorsement of Eisenhower over Adlai E. Stevenson for the 1952 presidential campaign. Jacobs views Eisenhower's years as university president as playing a significant role in preparing him for his White House years.

0-7658-0036-5 (cloth) 2001 223 pp. $34.95/£26.95

George Bush

Herbert S. Parmet



"The first comprehensive biography done by an independent historian...with the former president's blessing."

—Norman Ornstein, *The Washington Post*

Award-winning historian and biographer Herbert S. Parmet draws from George Bush's personal papers to look at the man who led America through the end of the Cold War. Enriched by access to Bush's private diaries, the book provides an intimate portrait of the forty-first president, and corrects many long-held misconceptions about him. Parmet shows George Bush within the context of a half century of American life and politics, at a time when great changes swept the nation.

0-7658-0730-0 (paper) 2000 585 pp. $24.95/£18.95

To order call toll free 888-999-6778, fax 732-748-9801
or visit our website **www.transactionpub.com**

transaction publishers
Department AD2001 ECGB, 35 Berrue Circle
Rutgers—The State University, Piscataway, NJ 08854

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Once And Future Berlin

By VICTORINO MATUS

WHEN THE BERLIN WALL came crumbling down in 1989, there was an electricity in the air over the city. The champagne was flowing freely. West Berliners and East Berliners, when they weren't embracing each other and banging on the hoods of Trabants, were feverishly chipping away at the concrete that had separated them for almost 30 years. It was the end of a totalitarian regime and the chance, once again, to start anew. But 12 years later, to the disappointment of some (and to the relief of others), Berlin isn't quite yet the center of power in Europe — at least not the way it was in its earlier incarnations this past century. Will it ever be? And if so, when?

Berlin, the city, stood at the crossroads of conflict in the twentieth century. Governments headquartered there were the instigators of two world wars and a campaign to eradicate an entire race of humans. The city went on to become the flashpoint of the Cold War. Thus Berlin's future is a matter of more than local interest. There are those who believe, following the end of communism in Europe, that Berlin was finally set on a path toward normalization. That the last 100 years were an aberration. That this current regime is no Weimar Republic teetering on the brink of collapse. On the other hand, just as the communists and Nazis fought over the votes of the disgruntled in the 1920s, so too do the heirs of communism and Nazism today vie for those same disgruntled voters — those who yearn for the days of the GDR

Victorino Matus is an associate editor at the Weekly Standard. *Research for this article was funded by the German Marshall Fund of the United States.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with all its welfare benefits and those who are unemployed and blame the *Gastarbeiters* for stealing their jobs. And with some frightening success — the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) has made gains in the former East German states and in Berlin. In the eastern districts of the capital, in particular, this successor to the East German Communist Party has garnered 40 percent in recent elections. Meanwhile, the DVU (German People's Union) has won a growing percentage of extreme right-wing votes in states like Saxony Anhalt (13 percent) and even in Berlin suburbs like Wedding (5 percent). Politicians who used to refer to the "Red" vote and the "Green" vote now talk openly about the "Brown" vote.

As Berlin goes, so goes Germany? There is reason to think so, ever since its inception as the German capital in 1871. And perhaps the many incarnations of Germany since this date account for why Berlin has never held fast to a single identity: The Garrison City. The New Athens. The German Chicago. Elektropolis. Babylon on the Spree. World City of the Future. Even Testicles of the West (according to Khrushchev). Maybe the only fitting description of Berlin is one offered by critic Karl Scheffler who, in 1910, described the city as condemned "forever to become and never to be."

New Athens

PRIOR TO GERMAN unification in 1871, Berlin was the embodiment of Prussian militarism. The city was a gigantic parade ground. The monuments that were built, from the Brandenburg Gate to the Siegessäule (Victory Column), were in one way or another related to war. In the mid-eighteenth century, Berlin was home to 20,000 soldiers — at a time when the population of the city totaled 100,000. (Thus it is unsurprising that Kaiser Friedrich's calling Berlin "the new Athens" was unconvincing to outsiders.) After the Franco-Prussian War, Berlin had become a center of political and military power alongside London and Paris. But still, while the rest of Europe recognized German prowess on the battlefield, to call Berlin a city of culture and modernity was simply laughable: Despite the excessive amount of money and resources dedicated to building the largest army in Europe, Berlin paid little attention to the tiny details — such as its water and sewage treatment facilities.

In *Berlin* (Basic Books) author David Clay Large recounts a vivid passage from Socialist leader August Bebel's memoirs:

> Waste-water from the houses collected in the gutters running alongside the curbs and emitted a truly fearsome smell. . . . One evening I went with my wife to the Royal Theater. I was revolted when, between acts, I visited the room designated for the relief of men's bodily needs. In the middle of the room stood a giant tub, and along the sides were chamber pots which each user had to empty himself into the communal pots.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bebel goes on to say that, "As a metropolis, Berlin did not emerge from a state of barbarism into civilization until after 1870." By the time of Kaiser Wilhelm I's death in spring 1888, Berlin was on the move, finally improving its sewage system, building the Technical University, an S-Bahn (elevated rail line), installing electric lamps and in a few places, telephones. Many Berliners also thought their city to be headed in a more cultural direction with the ascendancy of Wilhelm's son, Friedrich Wilhelm — a patron of the arts and a supporter of better relations with Great Britain. Unfortunately, throat cancer claimed his life after a 99-day reign, and his alienated son, Wilhelm II, would succeed him as the last kaiser of Germany, ruling for the next 30 years and taking Berlin to new heights before plunging it into disaster.

The image of Berlin was something to which Wilhelm was sensitive. He utterly despised his uncle, Edward VII, king of England, who looked down on his nephew and his little city. Edward once called Wilhelm "the most brilliant failure in history" while Wilhelm complained that his uncle "treats me as if I were a little boy." Large relates in his book that Wilhelm also believed his uncle's family thought of Berlin as a "beastly hole," and when the British royal family finally did pay a visit, they were shocked to discover "that Berlin actually had streets on which one could find hotels and big stores."

When city planners in 1892 proposed that Berlin hold the next World's Fair, Wilhelm bitterly responded by saying, "Berlin is not Paris. Paris is the great whorehouse of the world; therein lies its attraction independent of any exhibition. There is nothing in Berlin that can captivate the foreigner, except a few museums, castles, and soldiers."

And so the kaiser's inferiority complex would become the city's. And Berlin's drive towards modernity would then become relentless. At the turn of the century, electric streetcars were traveling side by side with automobiles. In 1902, a subway system was built. The center of activity became Potsdamer Platz, site of the first traffic light in all of Europe, and one of the busiest intersections in the world. As Brian Ladd explains in his brilliant *Ghosts of Berlin* (University of Chicago Press), "Potsdamer Platz *was* Berlin because Berlin was the city of bustle and speed."

Elektropolis

From 1871 to 1900, Berlin's identity as a city was as an up-and-comer, what many called "the youngest European city." The technical advances in the span of 30 years were impressive. Berliners claimed their city had more electrical lighting than Paris itself. Among its residents, the city was often referred to as an "Elektropolis," and more significantly, as a *Weltstadt* — a world city.

Again, most of the world remained skeptical. But some of this would change. In 1907, Kaiser Wilhelm was asked to offer financial backing for a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new hotel not far from the Brandenburg Gate. The hotelier, Lorenz Adlon, was convinced that what the city needed to boost its reputation on the continent was a world-class hotel — something that would demonstrate, once and for all, that Berliners knew a luxury on a par with London's Savoy, Paris's Ritz. And he convinced the kaiser to back it with, in today's money, roughly $250 million.

The Adlon proved a tremendous success. Unlike Wilhelm's own residence, the hotel offered hot running water, baths in every room, telephones in every room, and an exotic water fountain in the lobby that was a gift from the maharaja. The restaurant would offer only the most sumptuous of meals, including oysters, duck confit, foie gras, and flaming desserts. In no time, visitors from around Europe and America would come to Berlin for its shops, its museums, and most of all, to live it up at the Adlon. Its guests soon ranged from Presidents Roosevelt and McKinley to Tsar Nicholas and his entourage. It was recognized as something world-class in a city long ignored.

Through the outbreak of World War I, Berlin was also known for its openness to outsiders — namely its acceptance of Jews, who had been banished from much of Eastern Europe. Of course, Jews were hardly treated as equals, still barred from most professions. But in banking, journalism, and retail, they thrived. Germans would even come to refer to a "Berlin-Jewish symbiosis." In 1896 came the construction of a Jewish-owned department store, Wertheim. It featured 83 elevators and a glass-roofed atrium. Brian Ladd calls it "the crown jewel of the main shopping street." In 1907, Jewish businessman Hermann Tietz would build his famous Kaufhaus des Westens (department store of the West). By the 1920s, the Jewish population in Berlin numbered roughly 170,000 (one-third of all Jews living in Germany). It was this very notion of tolerance that caused many to remain in Berlin well into the 1930s and early '40s. And when they realized their city was to become "Jew-Free," it was too late.

Weltstadt

Nevertheless, in the years before 1914, Berlin had become a teeming metropolis. Many Berliners now reflect on the turn of the century with great nostalgia, as a time when the city could do no wrong. The economy was booming, its image as a *Weltstadt* rapidly gaining popularity. It was cosmopolitan, tolerant, well-read (claiming to have more newspapers than London), and even borderline decadent (David Clay Large observes that on the eve of World War I, Berlin had approximately 40 gay bars and an estimated 1,000 to 2,000 *male* prostitutes). When Berliners are asked today to recall their city's better times, many jump the hundred years to this era, when the future couldn't have been any brighter.

Whereupon Kaiser Wilhelm announced from his balcony that the nation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was going to war against Russia. At the outset, the city exuded confidence. The thousands who crowded before the kaiser to listen to his declaration of war were ecstatic. (Even the Socialists and the Association of German Jews supported the cause.) Pubs remained open late on the night of the announcement in order to further the celebrations. Soon, mobs of Germans descended on the Russian embassy, pelting it with rocks and assaulting the ambassador and his family all the way to the station. And while the Russians made it back safely, as Large writes, "their treatment was an ugly example of the xenophobic frenzy awakened by the prospect of war."

The war that many assumed would last a few short months would drag on for four years, and Berlin would soon begin to suffer the effects of shortages in supplies and food. As the death toll mounted, the population began to weary of the cause. The press started in on the kaiser and his series of poor military judgments, and the kaiser in turn would blame his woes on the Jewish press. But signs of a losing struggle were everywhere: As soon as horses dropped dead, a crowd of Berliners gathered around to carve up the carcasses for food. Zoo elephants drew coal carts. Soldiers were to be shot if they uttered the word "defeat." By war's end, epidemics were breaking out through much of the city — Spanish influenza took almost 2,000 lives on a single day. The residents had had enough of Kaiser Wilhelm II and his grand ambitions. He was finally forced to flee to Holland, ending 500 years of Hohenzollern rule.

The ensuing Weimar Republic government was offered the opportunity to do things right, a second chance to embrace democratic institutions. But this chance was hampered by insurmountable political and economic obstacles. The cost of the war, through the Treaty of Versailles, was enormous — a loss of 13 percent of Germany's territory (10 percent of its population), foreign occupation of the Rhineland, and a disbanding of much of the military, to name just a few of the conditions. The reparations, however, were far worse, totaling 132 billion gold marks — the equivalent, as Berlin newspapers quickly cited, of paying an annual 2.5 billion marks until 1966, then 1.5 billion through 1988.

At the same time, the country was struck by hyperinflation. In 1920, the mark stood at 99 to the dollar. A year later, it was at 263. By the end of 1922, one U.S. dollar was worth 7,368 marks. The year after that, the same dollar was worth 4,210,500,000,000 German marks. Economically, the Weimar government didn't stand a chance.

Babylon on the Spree

THE POLITICAL BACKLASH to Versailles and hyperinflation was swift. Political assassinations became commonplace, from Center Party politician Matthias Erzberger to Jewish Foreign Minister Walter Rathenau to communist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Luxemberg. In the city streets, members of the extreme left Independent Party of Democratic Socialism (UPDS) collided with the far right Freikorps (whose banner was already the swastika, even before Hitler adopted it).

Electorally, the left made the greater gains: In 1919, the socialists captured 36 percent of the vote in Berlin. In the 1925 presidential election, two years after Adolf Hitler's failed beerhall putsch, the city voted for centrist/liberal candidate Wilhelm Marx, who outpolled conservative Paul von Hindenburg 53 percent to 37 percent. But in terms of sheer brute force, it was the far right that made the greatest gains. From 1918 to 1922, the left was held responsible for about 30 political slayings throughout the city; the right, represented by the fearsome Freikorps, is counted as having committed 354 murders. Since they couldn't win the elections, they would win the body counts.

Despite the political ferment, Berlin in the 1920s became known for its Weimar culture of decadence. The Hotel Adlon thrived, even without a monarchy — this time with a large influx of foreign guests like Josephine Baker and Charlie Chaplin. Large's *Berlin* gives an account of writer Robert McAlmon's night on the town with his friends:

> McAlmon and his crowd moved on to the Adlon where they gorged on "cocktails, paté de foie gras, three bottles of wine, pheasant, Russian eggs . . . ." Then it was on to the Germania Palast and drinks. . . . For a break they went outside and snorted cocaine. . . . [T]hey ended their tour at the Oh la la!, a lesbian bar that did not open until 6 am. There they watched nude dancers, drank champagne, took some more drugs, and finally vomited it all up on the floor.

Americans with every fetish could come to Berlin and satisfy their urges on the cheap. Police estimated that prostitutes in the 1920s numbered over 25,000 — many were preteen girls and high school boys. There were approximately 10,000 pimps. This was Babylon on the Spree.

While foreigners could live luxuriously for a short while, after they got bored, they simply packed up and left. The Berliners starving on the street could not. They were stuck there, deprived and resentful. It was a disparity in lifestyle that was bound to create a backlash. In 1928, a Nazi propaganda sheet called Berlin "a melting pot of everything that is evil — prostitution, drinking houses, cinemas, Marxism, Jews, strippers, negroes dancing." It was one of the Nazis' major selling points in its campaign to restore "purity" to the city and the nation. The other selling point was the Treaty of Versailles, already an object of indignation among Germans. Hitler subscribed to a theory about the treaty known as the *Dolchstoss*, or "stab in the back." As Alexandra Richie relates in her mammoth history of Berlin, *Faust's Metropolis* (Carroll & Graff), this explanation for Germany's defeat rested on blaming not the military but "saboteurs, the gangsters, the war profiteers, the Socialists and Jews who populated Berlin."

Hitler and his brownshirts needed to wait only a few years for conditions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to deteriorate before they could seize power. By 1932, unemployment in Berlin stood at more than half a million and worsening. Once the communists forged a (temporary) alliance with the Nazis against the government, it was only a matter of time before the Weimar Republic was toppled. In January 1933 President Hindenburg found himself appointing Adolf Hitler chancellor of the Reich.

World City of the Future

It was the führer's intent that Berlin no longer be known as Babylon on the Spree, but rather the "World City of the Future." He explained: "What is ugly in Berlin, we shall remove, and Berlin shall now be given the very best that can be made." And when visitors entered his chancellory, they should "have the feeling that they are visiting the masters of the world." His architect, Albert Speer, would rebuild the nation's capital with an emphasis on axial orientation and, in David Clay Large's words, "hyperthyroid neoclassicism."

Those who stood in the way of the new Berlin would simply have to disappear. From the time of Hitler's arrival in 1933 to his suicide in 1945, more than 50,000 Berliners — Jews, communists, and other assorted political prisoners — would be deported, roughly 35,000 of them straight to Auschwitz. As late as 1942, Hitler's elite SS concluded that Berlin was not doing *enough* to eradicate its Jews, so much so the SS actually brought in "experts" from Vienna — a city that had practically wiped out its Jewish population.

In one of the greatest public relations schemes of the century, the 1936 Olympics, Hitler tried to impress the world by emphasizing his city's efficiency and modernity, not its anti-Semitism. During that time, Jews enjoyed temporary freedoms, and the placards condemning them and urging boycotts came down. The most extreme anti-Jewish publications were missing from newsstands. (Indeed, the authorities even let prostitutes ply their trade again.) But once the games ended and the tourists left, it was back to the business of purifying the city.

The City of the Future was not to be. The German invasion of Poland and the start of World War II marked the beginning of the end of the führer's dream of Germania. His hope for a "Hall of the People," with a proposed volume sixteen times that of St. Peter's in Rome and towering 954 feet above the city, would never come to pass. Part of Speer's project involved the clearing away of old buildings, a task that was accomplished by allied bombing. The effort to rebuild, however, never came about, since resources were needed elsewhere for the Reich's war effort.

Aerial bombing hit Berlin as early as 1940, though fatalities that year numbered less than 300. But with each passing year, more and more bombs began to rain down, destroying the factories, residences, historic sites, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vaunted transportation system, and eventually the centers of control and communication. As the war progressed, Berliners grew disillusioned with their leader's dreams and ambitions. When all around them was death and destruction, much of the city simply hoped for an end.

Flashpoint

That end would come with the arrival of the Soviet army in April of 1945. But if any Berliners thought the Soviets would bring an end to their misery, they were sorely mistaken. Filled with hatred for a country that had ravaged their homeland, the Soviets were determined to exact vengeance. And with the Americans and the British lagging behind to the west, the Red Army had two months to plunder and rape as much as was physically possible.

As punishment for starting the war, no simple treaty would suffice. No one German government would be permitted. The nation was to be divided among the allies. And the capital city would likewise be divided, though deep within the Soviet occupation zone of East Germany. For once, Berlin had no identity. Its future would be dictated by foreigners. Soon the western part of the city became "Showcase Berlin" — a demonstration of capitalism at its best. The east became the "Showpiece of Real Existing Socialism." For the residents of East Berlin, reeducation was a priority. Children in schools learned that they and their parents had fought valiantly alongside the Russians against the fascists of the West. Hitler was propelled to power thanks to greedy capitalists.

West Berlin's emphasis, on the other hand, was on freedom. Its leaders needed to present to the rest of the world the "Free City." Rather than deny any involvement with national socialism, West Berlin's new identity was rooted in the resistance and its victims, those whom the Nazis persecuted and martyred, such as the plotters of the July 20, 1944, attempt to assassinate Hitler. The only common identity the two cities shared was as a flashpoint of the Cold War. Even the Berlin Wall, erected by the East Germans in August 1961, was perceived differently by both sides. While the West openly called it a wall and a barrier to freedom and even encouraged graffiti as an expression of protest, the East referred to it as the "antifascist protective rampart." Citizens in East Berlin were told to ignore its existence, to look the other way.

From 1961 to 1989, the divided city would maintain separate identities, as champion of freedom and as "democratic republic." But with the fall of the wall in 1989, Berlin suddenly found itself with another chance to do things right. The city, like the nation, was finally brought together, and soon Berlin found itself again in the role of capital city. Since reunification, the German government has spent billions rebuilding the eastern part of the city and the lives of those who lived there. Dilapidated buildings needed repair

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or demolition, social services needed to be extended to the newly unemployed. Though Rome wasn't built in a day, many Germans thought Berlin could be built in a decade, finally completing the tortured process of normalization as a great world capital — a status glimpsed only briefly at the turn of the twentieth century.

Berlin 2001

On a visit to Berlin in February, I found a city that was still a gigantic construction yard — cranes having become a permanent fixture of the cityscape. The Adlon was rebuilt in 1997, amid much fanfare. It had burned down during the Red Army's occupation. Lorenz Adlon's descendants insisted the hotel should only be built when the city was one. And so, 90 years after its first opening, the Adlon was back — as lavish as ever. "Berlin is now the fourth most visited city in Europe by foreigners, only behind London, Paris, and Rome," the Adlon's communications director, Sabine Held, tells me. "We want to be third." Asked what image the city wants to convey now, Held admitted that that would have to be the heady days of Weimar. ("Why would you want to bring that back?" asks Franziska Lang, a Berlin archaeologist. "Weimar was a terrible time. We should be looking forward, not backward.")

Across from the Adlon, the French embassy is being erected. On the same block as the hotel is the new British embassy. Down the block on Unter den Linden is the Russian embassy. "We've got over 100 embassies setting up shop in and around Berlin. Of course we are a *Weltstadt*," says the speaker of the Berlin senate, Michael-Andreas Butz. "We are international too — the roof of our very own Reichstag was designed by Sir Norman Foster. Imagine if a German was to redesign Westminster Abbey?"

No one doubts that the Berlin Mitte district (which the wall had split), and particularly Pariser Platz on the eastern side of the Brandenburg Gate, have made phenomenal improvements. The center of the city has indeed shifted back to its historic location. And ghostly Friedrichstrasse in the former East is now competing against Kurfürstendamm in the West as a shopping and dining street. But parts of old East Berlin are still in need of much attention. And in the suburbs, where unemployment remains high, much reeducation of the "reeducated" is necessary. One member of the Berlin parliament who has gone to a few outlying neighborhoods to talk about democracy and freedom is Özcan Mutlu, a Turkish representative from Kreuzberg — one of Berlin's minority-majority districts. "I couldn't understand why I needed a police escort to visit a high school," says Mutlu. "But when I arrived, I realized every one of these 15-year-olds was a skinhead. They couldn't have cared less about democracy. They just kept shouting, 'Why are you here?' and 'Why are you in our country?'" Mutlu grows frustrated, saying, "Unemployment among the small Turkish minority is in dou-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ble digits, more than that among the native Germans. Can't they add?" He explains that despite a new generation being born after 1989, their parents, who lived underneath the GDR's welfare blanket, only tell them that life was much better. And a few older Germans tell these kids life was even better than that in the 1930s.

Meanwhile, city officials intend to rebuild the ancient Prussian residence destroyed during the last war and at the same time tear down the GDR's Palace of the Republic. Both decisions have caused an eruption from every corner of Berlin. It has become a raging debate over both identity and the direction the city should be going. Says Butz, "Prussia is a part of our history. And there's nothing really wrong with Prussian traditions. We are . . . [and here he pauses to come up with something positive] . . . punctual. Yes?" He also says that it is only natural for Germans to want back some measure of pride and patriotism. ("Patriotism?" asks Caroline Fetscher, a columnist with *Tagesspiegel*. "I just don't think a people responsible for killing two-thirds of Europe's Jewish population has any business engaging in patriotism." She adds, "Your Statue of Liberty and our Siegessäule are not exactly the same things.")

Berlin in 2001 is finding its way out of the darkness of its past — still becoming, not quite being. In a way, it's 1900 again.

The drive to tear down the Palace of the Republic is perceived by many East Germans as an act of arrogance by the *Wessis*. To those who lived under the communist regime, this is tantamount to erasing their history. Berliners ran into a similar problem when construction uncovered remnants of the headquarters of the SS, Gestapo, and the SD (SS security service). No one was quite sure what to do. Paving it over would be seen by some as an attempt to wipe away the city's past crimes — an act of denial. Others saw a memorial over the site as focusing too much on the victims and not enough on the perpetrators. To date, the city block that once housed the killing apparatus of the Third Reich remains partially uncovered and kept as an exhibit entitled "Topography of Terror." And just a few feet away from this excavation is one of the few remnants of the Berlin Wall.

Layers upon layers of history. A burden hard to fathom. And despite all that, almost all the Berliners I spoke with sounded optimistic. Take David Gill, a lawyer from East Germany who at the age of 23 was appointed head of the committee overseeing the newly released Stasi (East German secret police) files. He couldn't feel better: "Sure we have our problems. But if you were to tell me in 1990 that, having been raised in a communist country, barred from studying law because my degree was from a religious school, that I could one day become a lawyer and visit the world and live freely, I

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

just simply would not have believed you." Özcan Mutlu asks, "In 10 years' time? I am a pessimist. Rising debt is going to kill us." But on further reflection, he admits, "even though we have this skinhead problem and debts to repay, there is no other city I would rather live in. Well, except maybe New York or Istanbul. But Berlin is where it's at. Years from now, I'll be able to tell my grandchildren, 'Hey! I was there! I saw it all happen and did something about it.'"

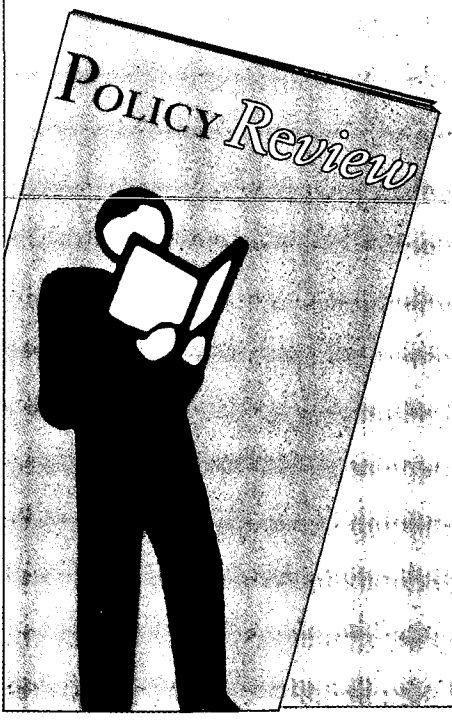
Nor is this merely elite sentiment. A cab driver from the western suburb of Charlottenburg says, "Sure we've got problems—like immigration. People with no concept of capitalism who come to Germany expecting to get rich. But are things going to get better? Absolutely. It'll all happen."

And so Berlin in 2001 is finding its way out of the darkness of its past — still becoming, not quite being. In a way, it's 1900 again. Berlin can still be called "the youngest European city." The slate is clean. The choice of what comes next is Berlin's alone, and the city has a chance to get the next hundred years right.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLICY *Review*

Politics
Society & Culture
National Policy
Foreign Affairs
Essays & Reviews



The Coming Ascent of Congress
by John J. Pitney, Jr.

"High Crimes" after Clinton
by Keith E. Whittington

The Trouble With Tax Cuts
by Bruce Bartlett

The GOP's Two Brands
by David Winston

Necessary Impeachments, Necessary Aquittals
by Tod Lindberg

The Quadrennial Fear of Ideas
by Daniel Casse

Read these and other recent articles from Policy Review on our website: www.policyreview.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS

Ronald Reagan, Author

By PAUL KENGOR

KIRON K. SKINNER, ANNELISE ANDERSON, MARTIN ANDERSON, EDITORS. *Reagan, In His Own Hand.* THE FREE PRESS. 549 PAGES. $30.00

NOT LONG AGO, an assistant professor at Carnegie Mellon University, Kiron Skinner, stumbled upon a box tossed in among Ronald Reagan's private papers. It turned out to be a treasure chest: It was one of several boxes of handwritten drafts of radio broadcasts, speeches, correspondence, and other documents. From 1975 to 1979, Reagan gave a daily syndicated radio broadcast, a commentary on politics and policy. He gave over a thousand of these commentaries. And as the contents of the boxes demonstrated, some 670 were written by Reagan alone, with no assistance. No speechwriters, no ghostwriters, just Reagan.

Reagan researchers (myself included) have dug and dug and never thought we'd find these broadcasts. I was told they didn't exist. But they do, and what emerges from them is a far fuller portrait of the mind of Ronald Reagan than the public has ever had before — and the complete discrediting of the caricature of him as an ill-informed and half-witted actor dependent on others for his lines.

The editors of *Reagan, In His Own Hand* are Skinner and Annelise and Martin Anderson, all three of whom are fellows at the Hoover Institution. Martin Anderson was a key Reagan economic advisor and has done some of the best work on the president. Annelise Anderson was a senior advisor to Reagan's 1980 campaign and served in his Office of Management and Budget.

Of the 670 broadcasts, this book publishes 220, many with photos of the handwritten copy. Included are all abbreviations, misspellings, notes, carats, crossed out lines — everything. Each is roughly 500 words in length. The photos are remarkable. Among them is a picture of one of Reagan's famous 4x6 cards, which contains a speech in itself. What Reagan was able to do with the shorthand, nonsensical mish-mash on this card, in terms of delivering a clear, well-communicated speech, is extraordinary. We only have the copy because one of the book's editors, Martin Anderson, was shrewd enough years ago to retrieve it from the

---

Paul Kengor is associate professor of political science at Grove City College. He is currently writing What Reagan Knew, *a book about the personal role of President Reagan in his administration's effort to undermine the Soviet empire.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wastebasket after seeing Reagan fold it in two and pitch it.

First and foremost, *Reagan, In His Own Hand* is a major research document. Perhaps its greatest value is as a primary source for Reagan scholars to mine and apply to their own research. I speak here from personal experience. This could be viewed as another Reagan diary — a contemporaneous memoir of his thoughts from 1975 to 1979, a historically neglected period in Reagan scholarship. This book shows how crucial that period was in focusing and formulating his policy positions for his 1980 presidential run and presidency.

The book shows that much of what happened in the 1980s is traceable to Reagan himself. Second, and more important, is that the book backs its claim — which I first suspected was hype, and I say this as an admirer of Reagan — that the broadcasts show that in the late 1970s he was a "one-man think tank."

What emerges is the Reagan hardly anyone but Nancy knew, not even many of his own speechwriters — Reagan the writer. The prolific writer.

Nancy Reagan relays: "[H]e was a very, very good writer. All of his ideas and thoughts were formulated well before he became governor or certainly president." On the writing of the radio broadcasts from 1975 to 1979, she recalled:

> He worked a lot at home. I can see him sitting at his desk writing, which he seemed to do all the time. Often he'd take a long shower because he said that was where he got a lot of his thoughts. He'd stand in the shower and think about what he wanted to write. And then, when he got out, he'd sit down and write....Nobody thought that he ever read anything either—but he was a voracious reader. I don't ever remember Ronnie sitting and watching television. I really don't. I just don't. When I picture those days, it's him sitting behind the desk in the bedroom, working.

The book provides pages of similar testimony from Reagan assistants Dennis LeBlanc, Barney Barrett, and David Fischer, as well as Mike Deaver, Ed Meese, and William P. Clark.

LeBlanc, a member of the California State Police, was assigned to the security detail of Gov. Reagan in 1971. He was with Reagan during the three-year period after he left the governorship. He was the only aide to travel continually with Reagan during that time, often traveling alone with him. "He was constantly writing," LeBlanc remembered. "What was amazing to me was the fact that Ronald Reagan never slept on planes when he was traveling. It was the same way when I was with him in the station wagon. It was like — you're wasting time if you are sleeping. You know, everyone's got things to do. And his thing to do when I was with him was his writing."

Shame on those in the press and academe who portrayed the man as precisely the opposite. They were lazy, not Reagan. They lazily accepted an easy caricature that was easily refutable. It appealed to them because it fed their own biases and agenda. If there's a mystery, an "enigma" about Reagan, it's that he contentedly allowed this caricature to be developed without caring to refute it — with such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My view is that it was because he was confident and secure enough not to care what critics said about his mind.

This book is also a credit to Reagan's work ethic. Without assistance, and while maintaining the full travel schedule (including a presidential campaign) of a working politician, he wrote 670 essays, some 335,000 words, in just four years. That's about one every other day. A syndicated columnist writing twice weekly will produce perhaps 75,000 words a year — less than Reagan's output, in other words.

The radio transcripts cover just about every policy issue of the day. The detail on taxes is rich. The material on foreign policy is overwhelming, particularly the breadth of countries Reagan analyzed, including the Third World. To give an example of Reagan's range, one roughly 20-page cluster of transcripts (about 3 percent of the total in the book) includes these titles: "Fish," "Apples," "Youth Employment," "OSHA," "Rapid Transit," "Agriculture," "Transportation," "Kettering," "Telescope I," "Telescope II," "Technology," "Phone," "Bugs," "Seal Hunt," "Alaska," "Federal Lands," "Land Planning," and "Property Rights."

Reagan wrote about these topics articulately and persuasively, with precision, and in single drafts with only a few edits. These essays reveal, first and foremost, a communicator of ideas to the ordinary man. "I know a lot of intelligent people who can't write," commented Martin Anderson. "But I don't know any person who writes this well who is not intelligent."

One of the most compelling broadcast scripts is one he titled simply, "Communism, the Disease," written in May 1975. "Mankind has survived all manner of evil diseases and plagues," wrote Reagan, "but can it survive Communism?" This disease had been "hanging on" for a half century or more. As a result, Reagan felt it imperative to remind us "just how vicious it really is." This especially needed doing because the practitioners of communism, like many practitioners of medicine, sometimes came up with euphemisms or "double talk" to "describe its symptoms and its effects." For example, said Reagan, "if you and I in America planted land mines on our borders, ringed the country with barbed wire and machine gun toting guards to keep anyone from leaving the country we'd hardly describe that as 'liberating' the people." This was classic Reagan, on the attack, always speaking candidly, calling evil by its name. "Communism," he added for good measure, "is neither an economic

Without assistance, and while maintaining the full travel schedule (including a presidential campaign) of a working politician, he wrote 670 essays, some 335,000 words, in just four years.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or a political system — it is a form of insanity." He then made one of those seemingly wild predictions we'd hear throughout his presidency, mostly greeted by ridicule from his critics: Communism was "a temporary aberration which will one day disappear from the earth because it is contrary to human nature."

Another remarkable speech he wrote circa 1963 states that an arms race would bankrupt the Soviets. That's a very important find from the viewpoint of historians and presidential scholars.

Aside from radio broadcasts, the book contains 20 other Reagan writings from 1925 to 1994, even some poems and college essays. These include a remarkable find from October 4, 2000, by Martin Anderson. On that day, at Nancy Reagan's request, he examined the papers in the former president's desk in his office in Century City, Calif. There, he found a gem: a September 23, 1984, memo written by Reagan, titled simply, "Mr. Minister," which lays out talking points for U.S. strategy for dealing with the Soviet Union.

As an economist, Anderson was most surprised by the February 5, 1981, economic speech given by Reagan in New York shortly into the presidency. "It was a major speech," he recalled. "I remember it well." Anderson found the handwritten 15-16 page version by Reagan in his own hand. "I never knew he wrote it," Anderson told me. "I don't know that any of us knew. The speechwriters I've talked to didn't even know he wrote it."

Another remarkable speech he wrote circa 1963 states that an arms race would bankrupt the Soviets. That's a very important find from the viewpoint of historians and presidential scholars. It means that Reagan had the notion as early as 18 years before his presidency began that an "all out race" could kill the Soviet Union. That was his own view. One can't argue that it came from the people around him.

Thanks to this book, we now also have access to the full text of Reagan's remarkable March 17, 1980, speech to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, written by Reagan himself on March 13, 1980, titled "'State of the Union' Speech." I knew of the speech and found quotes from it in newspapers and other documents. This, however, is the first full copy I've seen. The lengthy speech broadly lays out what would become Reagan administration policy toward the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

He begins by describing the Soviet Union as "an imperialist power whose ambitions extend to the ends of the earth," which "has now surpassed us in virtually every type of weapon. The Soviets arrogantly warn us to stay out of their way." And how have we responded? Reagan takes aim at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Carter administration: "by finding human rights violations in those countries which have been historically our friends & allies. Those friends feel betrayed and abandoned and in several specific cases they have been." Attacking the Soviets, Cuba, and Carter policy, he adds: "A Soviet slave state has been established 90 miles off our coast; our embassies are targets for terrorist attacks; our diplomats have been murdered and half a hundred Americans are captives going into the 5th month now in our embassy in Iran."

In this vintage Reagan speech, the message is clear: The problem is weakness. "May I suggest an alternate path this nation can take," Reagan then asks, "a change in foreign policy from the vacillation, appeasement and aimlessness of present policy?

"That alternate path must offer three broad requirements," assessed Reagan. "*First* it must be based on firm convictions, inspired by a clear vision of, and belief in America's future. *Second*, it calls for a strong economy based on the free market system which gave us an unchallenged leadership in creative technology. *Third*, and very simply we must have the unquestioned [military] ability to preserve world peace and our national security." He then details all three, distilling the approach he would take in the 1980s.

Reagan, In His Own Hand offers little in the way of interpretation. That was the editors' intent. Their aim was to "show not tell," leaving interpretation to other scholars.

The book holds a lesson for presidential scholars: Quit simply reading and citing each other and start digging into primary sources. To know a president, one must do far more than just read the writings of other scholars who never met the man and, worse, in Reagan's case, have frequently harbored political biases against him. Also, in Reagan's unique case, there is a great deal of prepresidential material, far more than for the vast majority of other presidents — itself a telling fact about his intellect.

This book lifts a veil. It offers us a long, careful, extremely informative look. Again, Skinner and the Andersons have shown, not told. Still, the telling needs to be done. If there is fairness in the world and in academe, others will mine this material and begin the telling.

The Eternal President

By Kenneth Weinstein

John Patrick Diggins. *On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History*. Yale University Press. 330 pages. $27.95

John Patrick Diggins, Distinguished Professor of History at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, is one of America's leading public intellectuals. His numerous works, which

---

Kenneth Weinstein is senior fellow and director of the Washington office of the Hudson Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

include *The Lost Soul of American Politics* (1986), *The Rise and the Fall of the American Left* (1992), and *Max Weber: Politics and The Spirit of Tragedy* (1996), use history and philosophy to diagnose what ails contemporary America. His latest book, *On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History*, continues that diagnosis. There, Diggins argues that Abraham Lincoln is America's greatest public philosopher and that the core of his political philosophy — equality, property rights and the transformative role of labor — offers the clearest, most unified vision of the principles that guide American history.

In the autobiographical preface to *On Hallowed Ground*, Diggins declares that as an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley in the 1950s, "I lost my faith and found my mind." After coming to see the authority of the Catholic Church as ungrounded in reason, Diggins lost his religion and found solace instead in intellectual history, the "endless hunt for lost treasures" amid the great ideas of the past.

Today, however, Diggins believes that intellectual history has lost its way, having been transformed from a discipline seeking "what is true and real" to a field with an almost singular preoccupation: to demonstrate that "'truth' is simply a convention at the mercy of contingency." Diggins laments the fact that intellectual history is increasingly dominated by antifoundationalists, historians who present themselves as shatterers of the myths embodied in venerable "dominant paradigms."

These intellectual historians, particularly those championing identity politics, multiculturalism, and poststructuralism, have had a corrosive impact on America's civic culture. The result, Diggins finds, is greater confusion today than at any time in our history about what it means to be an American citizen.

Diggins views himself as a "cold water historian." For most of the three decades preceding *On Hallowed Ground*, he doused cold water on various neo-Marxist, pragmatist, and classical republican theories. The intellectual basis for each of these schools — Marx's notion of human unity through communism, the pragmatist focus on reshaping society through intelligent cooperation, and the classical republican focus on duty — abstracts from the proper understanding of self-interest as the motor of liberal society.

Maintaining this focus on self-interest, Diggins turns his guns on two current trends dominating the fin-de-siècle academy: post-structuralism and multiculturalism. According to Diggins, post-structuralism (also known as deconstruction) denies us immediate knowledge of how things are. Instead of direct knowledge, we come to know people and societies only by the mediation of social constructions. Language, the great mediator, places things forever out of our reach. Denying the knowledge of reality outside of social construction, post-structuralists seek to expose, and undermine, the assumptions behind all systemic grounds for knowledge. Once the assumed center of a system of thought is revealed, such thinkers believe it will implode of its own account.

If post-structuralism gives us a picture of a world with no fixed epistemological categories and no knowable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reality, multiculturalism, Diggins argues, goes just the opposite direction, in which ethnic and racial categories are absolutely determinative. Multiculturalism stresses the overriding force of ethnic traits. This focus on the determinative aspects of ethnic origin leads multiculturalists to focus on race and racial heritage to the exclusion of rational argument available to all, and to hypothesize about a politics of "difference" that society cannot overcome.

To combat these strains of thought, Diggins turns to Lincoln, whom he finds to be America's most philosophical president. Lincoln reshaped America in the crucible of the great crisis over slavery, the crisis that tested the very meaning of liberty and equality. "In Abraham Lincoln," Diggins writes, "liberal democracy found its educator." Speaking in the Gettysburg Address of "a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," Lincoln offered the most striking example of the idea that America's political ideals, voiced in the Declaration of Independence, transcend differences of race, gender and ancestry. In short, Lincoln taught that to know America is to know the meaning of the Declaration's creed of the self-evident truth that all men are created equal.

Diggins finds a precursor to today's academic debates in the debate over slavery, in which advocates of slavery and their allies denied moral universalism and stressed the inalienability of racial characteristics. Like today's multiculturalists who deny a common American culture, Sen. John C. Calhoun demanded the recognition of the Southern cultural "difference." Stephen Douglas championed the "politics of difference" by denying that America required a unified moral foundation. Calhoun even went so far, Diggins notes, as to "deconstruct" the Declaration's claim that all men are born free and equal. For Calhoun, as for the postmodernists, there is no higher truth in politics than the presence of power and the conflict of opposing interests. On these grounds, no liberal politics respecting the natural rights of autonomous and equal citizens can be built.

Lincoln reshaped America in the crucible of the great crisis over slavery, the crisis that tested the very meaning of liberty and equality. "In Abraham Lincoln," Diggins writes, "liberal democracy found its educator."

Rejecting this cultural relativism and the politics of domination, Lincoln offers a clear vision of national unity through the "moral emblem" of the Declaration of Independence and its philosophical underpinnings in Lockean liberalism. Diggins, following his intellectual mentor, the late Louis Hartz, author of *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955), argues that America's unique social conditions —

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in particular, the absence of any residue of a feudal class structure — provided the basis for the "natural equality" of American society.

According to Diggins, Lincoln's great faith, built on the cornerstone of the Declaration of Independence, was in the "life of labor and industry." This common life was, for Lincoln, the great unifying and leveling force in American society. Lincoln recognized the genius of the capitalist system, especially the dynamism of production that private property generates. He marveled particularly at America's capacity for invention, a direct consequence of her strict system of patent law, and reverence for intellectual and physical property. These, he noted, added "the fuel of interest to the fire of genius." Lincoln rejected slavery, in part, because it denied men the fruits of their labor, and thereby the incentive to improve their condition. In Lincoln's synthesis, the labor theory of value based on equal opportunity was the great engine of self-improvement:

> I want everyman to have a chance — and I believe the black man is entitled to it — when he may look forward and hope to be a hired laborer this year, and next, work for himself afterwards, and finally to hire men to work for him. This is the true system.

For Calhoun, as for the postmodernists, there is no higher truth in politics than the presence of power and the conflict of opposing interests. On these grounds, no liberal politics respecting the natural rights of autonomous and equal citizens can be built.

Lincoln's "true system" — "America's redeeming synthesis," according to Diggins — transcends differences of gender, race, and ethnicity. And it is this "redeeming synthesis," first articulated by John Locke, that defended everyone's right to own property, regardless of race, because it was the fruit of one's own labor. Despite the claims of the postmoderns, Lockean liberalism shatters race and gender-based exclusion. Moreover, Diggins notes, the major political efforts of blacks and women have been undertaken, in fact, in the name of Lockean, not radical, principles.

Diggins has written a remarkable book, one acutely aware of the contemporary academy and its shortcomings. His blistering attack on the 1994 National History Standards, a document produced by a National Endowment for the Humanities-funded center at the University of California at Los Angeles, is telling. The impetus for the document came originally from the Reagan administration's concern that American students were ignorant of American history. But rather than

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

focusing on Washington, Jefferson, or Lincoln, the report offered instead a litany of multicultural platitudes. Diggins notes:

> Not since the Nazi propaganda has a document like the National History Standards so minimized the importance of the western Enlightenment and replaced political knowledge about human nature with cultural mystiques about races and racial heritages.

Such comments are all the more remarkable since *On Hallowed Ground* is not written from a conservative perspective. Diggins does not consider himself a conservative; conservatives, he believes, misunderstand American history, its tensions and the rejection of authority at the heart of Lockean political philosophy.

Impressive and worthwhile as it is, not all of *On Hallowed Ground*'s ambitions are met. The book covers too much ground too rapidly — and some of it, unfortunately, repetitively — from Calhoun to post-structuralism, from Hartz to the 1994 National History Standards, from the Port Huron Statement to the Gettysburg Address. But Lincoln's own words, largely overlooked in the second and third parts of the book, provide a rich enough antidote to the excesses of the contemporary academy. Diggins' interest in Lincoln is far narrower, and ultimately far less illuminating than the textual analyses offered by Harry Jaffa in his 1959 *Crisis of the House Divided*, which still remains the authoritative gloss. Nonetheless, Diggins demonstrates what an astute critic of academic trends can learn from the wisdom of our greatest president.

Fatter Than Ever

By Rhoda Rabkin

Richard Klein. *Eat Fat*. First Vintage Books. 247 pages. $13.00

Robert Pool. *Fat: Fighting the Obesity Epidemic*. Oxford University Press. 292 pages. $27.50

Although many Americans are dissatisfied with their weight, personal struggles with body size have not yet generated much political debate. Until now, each individual has battled the problem alone, or at most with the assistance of a doctor or commercial weight loss program. Increasingly, however, we hear voices raised, like that of Robert Pool, to insist that overweight and obesity are a "public health issue" that needs to be addressed by public policy. At the same time, we hear other voices, like that of Richard Klein, perhaps less attended to, but of equal vehemence, insisting that the health consequences of excess weight have been greatly exaggerated by a "fat phobic" culture. Who is right?

We should begin by acknowledging

Rhoda Rabkin is an adjunct scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that Americans spend a small fortune every year on diet books, diet aids, exercise equipment, personal trainers, and so-called diet foods. Yet somehow all this expenditure has not reduced their waistlines. Every year, Americans as a group become on average more overweight than before. *Time* recently reported that more than 60 percent of us are either obese or overweight, whereas 20 years ago, only 47 percent could be categorized as such.

"Obesity" is a medical term to describe persons with a body mass index (BMI)[1] greater than 30; anyone with a BMI between 25 and 30 is deemed merely overweight. According to some estimates, roughly 30 percent of the adult population in America is obese, and obesity is also more common among young people today than in the past. Some endocrinologists believe they now see more cases of early onset of puberty in young girls (some as young as seven and eight) quite possibly caused by excess juvenile weight.

If obesity is a disease, it is a "disease of affluence," and naturally, America leads the world in obesity. But it is by no means exclusively an American problem; in a recent report, Britain's National Audit Office estimated that nearly two-thirds of men and more than half of women in Britain are either overweight or obese. International health researchers also report increases in other parts of the world, including not just Europe, but Asia and Latin America.

If you are a casual reader of newspaper health news and advice columns, which tend to equate health with leanness, you may find these trends alarming. In fact, however, the exact health consequences of overweight and obesity are controversial. Most doctors believe that excess pounds increase the risk of early death from heart disease, stroke, and diabetes; and some researchers argue that even a small deviation from leanness is unhealthy. Other health experts, however, are convinced that the relationship between weight and health is quite complex, and that the diet and sedentary lifestyle of many overweight people are more significant risk factors for disease than the poundage as such. In fact, there may be an emerging consensus that most people, even while remaining overweight, can improve their health measurably merely by eating more fiber-rich foods and incorporating more activity and weight-bearing exercise into their daily routines. What is especially important, and acknowledged by Pool himself, is that no one has yet demonstrated that losing weight will make people live longer.

BUT EVEN IF Americans could be reassured that extra pounds need not threaten their lives, it is unlikely that the cultural preoccupation with thinness will soon disappear. A slender physique is desirable in our society, since it is perceived as a marker for

[1]Body-mass index is your weight in kilograms divided by the square of your height in meters. Numerous web sites provide handy calculators that will compute BMI from your weight in pounds and height in inches. But real accuracy requires calipers and someone well-trained in using them to measure your individual percentage of body fat.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

both youth and wealth. And it has been that way, say the cultural historians, since the early twentieth century.

In recent decades, however, the high valuation placed on thinness, and a corresponding stigmatization of the overweight, seems to have grown more extreme. The average weight, but not the height, of contestants at the Miss America pageant has been dropping since the 1940s. In 1954, the average weight of the contestants was 121 pounds with an average height of 5 feet 6 inches. By the early 1980s, however, the average weight for a 5'8" contestant was 117 pounds, and the average for a 5'5" contestant was 108.5 pounds. But we shouldn't single out the pageant for disseminating a starved ideal of female beauty; the same skeletal norm prevails today throughout the entertainment industry. Where now are the movie star equivalents of the full-figured sex goddesses of the past, such as Mae West, Jean Harlow, Ava Gardner, or Marilyn Monroe? Given the surrounding culture, and the stigma against fat, it is no surprise that many young women have become intensely preoccupied with their weight, and that eating disorders, including anorexia and bulimia, have become more prevalent.

Overweight people are frequently viewed as lacking in self-control, and perhaps other desirable attributes, such as competence and intelligence. Consider, for example, the public image of America's most famous fat person, the television character Homer Simpson, who is irresistibly drawn to food. And it isn't just him. In a recent court case in New Jersey (one of the few states that includes obesity under its antidiscrimination law), a judge ruled that a fired obese man could sue, provided that he presented medical evidence that his obesity was not simply the product of "overindulgence and lassitude." At the very time that norms of civility have become more strict, requiring, for example, that we refrain from ridiculing each other for skin color, mental and physical disabilities, or sexual orientation, jokes at the expense of fat Americans still seem socially quite acceptable. Klein complains that "We are still allowed, in polite society, to hate fatties, because fat, it seems self-evident, is hateful."

Given the intensity of social disapproval of the overweight, why are Americans fat and getting fatter? Despite many plausible theories, no one has yet advanced a completely satisfying explanation, and that is in itself unsettling. Robert Pool argues that overweight is a natural response to an unnatural environment, where calorie-rich food is readily available with little or no physical effort. To illustrate his argument, Pool cites the case of the Pima Indians, a hardy, lean people well-adapted to their rigorous desert environment in the nineteenth century, but today one of the most obese and unhealthy subpopulations in the United States.

Pool is no doubt correct that our modern civilization, in which applied science has furnished us with what our ancestors could only wish for, easily obtainable and abundant food, is the enabling factor for overweight. But Pool's book does not well account for the timing of the American obesity epidemic: It is not obvious that food was more abundant, or labor-saving devices such as elevators more prevalent, in the 1990s than they were a decade or more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back. This is a troubling omission in a book which proclaims that our obesity epidemic "is not an individual problem. It is a disease caused by a sick environment to which some of us are more susceptible than others."

One possible culprit that Pool mentions, but does not analyze in depth, is the growing tendency of many Americans to rely on the fast food industry for meals. In a recently published, much praised book, *Fast Food Nation*, Eric Schlosser lays the blame squarely on McDonald's, Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, et al. "As people consume more meals outside the home," he writes, "they consume more calories, less fiber, and more fat." Yet Schlosser does not analyze why Americans, when they leave home, do not seek out purveyors of wholesome food. Why can't I stop off the highway and find an establishment that offers grilled chicken, a fresh romaine and raddichio salad, and some nice blackberries for dessert? One reason might be that healthy "fast food" would require the use of fresh, in-season ingredients that are costly and resist the standardized preparation that has allowed for labor-saving, low-priced mass feeding. You get what you pay for. But even this consideration cannot explain why in the late 1950s the typical size of a soda order was eight ounces, while the child-size Coke at McDonald's today is twelve ounces. Yet Schlosser does not hesitate to compare American eating establishments to disease-carrying populations of mosquitoes or deer-ticks: "The obesity epidemic that began in the United States during the late 1970s is now spreading to the rest of the world, with fast food as one of its vectors."

Richard Klein has his own interesting ideas about why Americans have become so fat. For one thing, he points out, Americans lack what the French call the "discipline of eating," in which meals are highly structured, ritual social events. The problem with American eating, from this standpoint, is not the fat content of the food consumed, but the atrocious haste with which the victuals are chowed down, so that people do not even give their bodies a chance to regulate intake through the natural feedback process of satiety signals. By contrast, the French sit around and talk, the argument goes, thus requiring them to take time to chew in a civilized manner and thereby to truly savor a well-prepared meal. This is an appealing theory, though as yet the hard evidence is lacking. Americans do seem to have lost the tradition of formal family dining; 61 percent of readers of *Bon Appetit* claimed recently that they sat down for a family meal at least two or more times a week, but that is hardly a reassuring statistic. On the other hand, maybe France is not such a stronghold of the slender anyway. A recent study of international obesity rates indeed found that the Haute-Garonne region of France had one of the lowest prevalences of obesity; however, one of the regions with the highest prevalence was also in France (Bas-Rhein). Perhaps the next big breakthrough in obesity research will come when we send in a team of anthropologists to compare the rates at which different groups of Frenchmen chew.

Klein also offers another provocative explanation for the American tendency to gain weight against our conscious wills. In his view, precisely because we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strive for an unnatural degree of thinness, our bodies are fighting back. Dieting tells the hypothalamus that we are starving; in response, the body lowers metabolism, hoards calories, and desperately sends out hunger signals to the brain. The result is a "yo-yo" pattern of weight loss and subsequent weight regain, which leaves the body ever more reluctant to part with fat reserves.

Klein's argument that dieting causes weight gain is parsimonious and nicely paradoxical, and it fits some facts. Unfortunately, it is also at odds with at least some other important ones. For example, studies show that American black women tend to be satisfied with their bodies and yet are significantly more overweight than white women. Nor is it likely that the "rebound" effect of rigorous dieting has much to do with excessive weight among males, since they are less likely to engage in dieting.[2] In fact, the true causal relationship may run in exactly the opposite direction from what Klein posits: Instead of becoming fat because we try too hard to be thin, it may be that we overesteem thin because we ourselves are fat.

But obesity research supports Klein's contention that the human metabolism defends a certain "set-point," a particular weight at which the body feels comfortable. In one famous experiment, state prison inmates volunteered to stuff themselves until they had increased their body weight by 25 percent. The prisoners almost uniformly found the process difficult and unpleasant. And interestingly, only a few, when allowed to eat normally, had any difficulty shedding the pounds and returning to their normal weight! We all readily accept that the human body tries to maintain a steady level of physiological variables such as temperature or amount of sugar in the blood. Yet many of us resist the idea, strongly suggested by this experiment, that some powerful homeostatic principle may regulate each individual's fat stores and body weight.

Unfortunately, it seems that homeostasis is very much in evidence when we are trying to slim down, but almost unnoticeable when we really need it, for example, in the weeks after Thanksgiving.

Unfortunately, for most of us it seems that homeostasis is very much in evidence when we are trying to slim down, but almost unnoticeable when we really need it, for example, in the weeks after Thanksgiving. Apparently, the set-point in most people tends to drift upwards with age. Moreover, in some people the set-point seems always poised to head upward with only the slightest provocation, such as a decrease in physical activity as when

[2]During the 1990s, body-image concerns among gays have, however, contributed to a great increase in the male demand for liposuction.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Pima Indians no longer had to engage in back-breaking agriculture or to run all day to defend agains Apaches.

Pool's book is especially valuable in documenting the scientific research which helps explain why the efforts of those who earnestly seek to reduce weight meet with so little success. In his view, Americans spend money on the products of the weight-loss industry because they accept outdated conventional wisdom about the relationship between diet and weight. The conventional wisdom — still propounded in numerous "fitness" magazines and taught in high school health classes — is very simple: When people consume more calories than they use, the body stores the excess as fat. So losing weight is relatively straightforward as a matter of physics; you just eat less and exercise more.

Unfortunately, the matter is by no means so simple, once we introduce the perspective of biological self-regulation, because "hunger," the urge to eat, seldom smoothly adjusts to the new body weight achieved. In fact, it appears that at least for those who are 20 or more pounds overweight, appetite only infrequently adjusts downward as it "should." But we Americans are an optimistic people. Hardly anyone investigates the long-term success rate of a commercial weight-loss program before signing up.

Some will view skeptically the argument of medical researchers that obesity is best understood as a disease, a disorder of appetite, not a failure of self-discipline and moral character. Conservatives especially are inclined to resist the "medicalization" of behaviors that were once perceived as clearly moral failings (for example, alcoholism, homosexuality, kleptomania, etc.).

But if there is any area where a biologically based understanding of human behavior is justified, surely the drive for food must be it. If our ancestors had not been powerfully motivated to search for food, they would have stayed all day in their caves engaged in occupations, such as exchanging gossip, or discussing art and philosophy, of intrinsically greater interest than food collection. All of us know people who are able to maintain a normal weight without struggling. In fact, many of us can remember in our younger years having been such people ourselves. Consequently, although decisions about what and when to eat appear to be individual, discrete, and seemingly under our conscious control, obesity researchers deserve a respectful hearing when they discount the "illusion of free will" in relation to daily food intake. Accepting that different individuals may, because of genetic endowment and age, have naturally different appetites and body sizes does not necessarily mean endorsing a mechanistic, reductive view of human nature as a whole.

But not all the evidence supports the view of overweight and obesity as a fact of nature outside of rational human control. For one thing, in America, obesity and overweight are negatively correlated with income and education. The wealthier you are, the more likely you are to be slim. It is possible, of course, that wealthy people have a genetic endowment that predisposes them to thinness; but it is hard to believe that God is that unfair.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But if not genes, what could explain why, in America today, the rich are thinner on average than the poor? Part of the explanation is almost certainly the same as the reason that fewer upper-income people today smoke cigarettes; their subculture influences them to cultivate health-conscious habits. In addition, it is probably the case that remaining slender is facilitated, not only by personal discipline, but by the investment of time and money. In the good old days, people from most social classes tended to walk to places where they wished to go. Nowadays they drive, and if they want exercise, they need to join a health club, or buy home equipment (and find a place to store it). And it is not just a matter of money, but also time. Just to cite one example, both time and money are needed to make low-calorie meals as sensually appealing as the kind we may have grown accustomed to eating. Rush Limbaugh should be congratulated on his candor for explaining that his breakthrough in weight reduction came, not only after he stopped drinking, but when he could free himself from the burden of counting calories and obsessing over food choices by the simple expedient of hiring a first-rate chef!

It would be interesting to know whether the actual content of the daily calories consumed has a stimulating (or conversely a dampening) impact on appetite. Studies of mice show that some diets are indeed more "fattening" than others. Despite the undeniable difference between laboratory mice and ourselves, we are not terribly surprised to learn that in one experiment, mice fattened up on a diet high in fat and sugar, but others got skinny on a cuisine adulterated with bitter-tasting quinine. The implications of this experiment would seem to be that a rich, delicious diet is fattening, and that you eat more when the food tastes good. This can be easily verified from experience, as when one is tempted, after a perfectly adequate meal, to squeeze in a slice of chocolate mousse-cake. A similar principle underlies the fad diets that were quite popular in the 1940s and '50s, the kind that advised eating only grapefruit and toast, or only Jell-O. These diets "worked" because people got bored with only one food, and so lost some of their appetite, and so lost weight at least in the short run (though with very negative consequences for their overall nutrition and health). A similar principle is behind the advice frequently given that dieters should not keep "tempting" foods, such as brown-

Although decisions about what and when to eat appear to be individual, discrete, and seemingly under our conscious control, obesity researchers deserve a respectful hearing when they discount the "illusion of free will" in relation to daily food intake.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ies, potato chips, etc. in their homes. No one, the theory is, even if feeling hungry, will binge on lettuce or celery, or even mangoes and raspberries.

The idea that people seek a certain amount of sensual gratification from their food each day, and will consume fewer calories so long as they are not deprived of it, is behind all the efforts to develop substances, such as Nutrasweet and Olestra, which attempt to comfort us without the calories. But if the obesity research on homeostasis is correct, these efforts to deceive the taste buds will not have much impact on the underlying problem, which lies not in the palate, but in the hypothalamus, which is not so easily fooled. As Richard Klein has noted, when people see that a food is labeled "low-calorie," they frequently take that as a license to eat more. And the real mechanism may not even be conscious.

The alert reader will have noticed that, in the above discussion, we have encountered two quite different philosophies of weight control. According to one, we should eat only controlled portions of stuff we really like (in my case a chocolate-dipped anise biscotti with coffee at mid-morning) so as to feel psychologically gratified. This takes some discipline. According to the second viewpoint, we should only eat food that does not especially appeal to us, so we won't be tempted to eat too much. This takes even more discipline. There can't be much future in a diet plan that allows people to eat as much as they want of food they hate. But perhaps the two positions can be synthesized, if the real trick is to habituate ourselves — gradually — to good-tasting low-calorie meals.

Unfortunately, the scientific understanding that food intake is regulated by a complex set of molecular signals does not mean that doctors understand these mechanisms well enough to manipulate them to our advantage. Nevertheless, we keep trying, and huge sums are invested each year in the search for appetite-suppressing pharmaceuticals. Because so many Americans are already either obese, overweight, or afraid of becoming so, the potential profits in a successful weight-loss drug could be enormous. But the history of such drugs so far is a record of failure. There was dinitrophenol in the 1930s, which raised the body's metabolic rate and definitely caused weight-loss, but with frightening side effects, such as headaches, weakness, vomiting, and diarrhea, to say nothing of fever-induced death. Then came the amphetamines, which suppressed appetite successfully, but whose side-effects, such as heart problems, addiction, and (in large doses) paranoia were not at first recognized. There was a flurry of excitement with the discovery of leptin in 1994, but this substance, naturally occurring in the body and believed to signal satiety to the brain, was not the magic bullet either (except for a few people with rare genetic disorders). The most recent supposed miracle drug was fen-phen, which was so popular in the 1990s, before its deadliness was discovered, that pharmacists had great difficulty keeping it in stock.

BOTH POOL and Klein are opposed to weight-loss pharmaceuticals, and given the record of truly alarming side-effects thus far, they are well within their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rights to be suspicious. But the alternatives to medication are only two: (1) accept a certain level of overweight as natural to the particular society we live in, or (2) attempt to engineer society so as to remove the temptation to overeat and exercise too little that contributes to obesity. Klein recommends the first; Pool the second.

There would be no need to medicate ourselves if we simply accepted our overweight condition. Thanks to the iconoclastic work of Richard Klein and others, we are able to consider what a defense of fatness might look like. Klein reminds us that our current lean ideal is unrepresentative of the way human beauty has been perceived historically, and his case here is solid enough. Unfortunately, standards of physical beauty in our species, although culturally variable, do not seem highly amenable to rational control. In the past, people living with precarious food supplies saw a fleshy human form as signifying health and prosperity. Even today, in Niger and many other parts of Africa, the ample body is admired, and modern-minded women even take steroids to help themselves bulk up. But in the absence of a global threat to the world food supply (which Klein wistfully entertains) or a definitive pharmaceutical solution ("When everyone can be thin by popping a pill, suddenly fat will look hot") it is difficult to see how we can rid ourselves of the beauty ideal appropriate to our own level of food abundance.

Pool argues that even if weight-loss drugs could be perfected, long-term medication is the wrong approach, and that we should instead devise social policies aimed at altering the environment that is "making people sick." His recommendation would be more meaningful if we had something other than the vaguest idea as to which factors are really responsible. Should your remote channel changer be treated as a disease pathogen? Your car? What exactly does Pool want to do — program your television to spy on you and shut off if you eat while you watch?

One is tempted to dismiss Pool's plea for new social policies as merely rhetorical. But on reflection, there are possibilities. Taxing "low-nutrition" food and banning commercials for fatty snacks were proposed, in perfect seriousness, some years ago by Kelly Brownell of Yale University. Some European countries have banned television advertising aimed at children, which has the salutary effect of making it more difficult for tots to find out about Happy Meals. One can easily imagine even more aggressive policies, such as tax credits for health club memberships and home gym equipment. Perhaps we could install electronic monitors on cardio- machines to report the intensity and duration of our workouts to the IRS. Come to think of it, why fool around with the resource input side of public policy? We could get direct and just tax poundage, adjusting for height.

Pool maintains that food abundance and lack of daily opportunities to exercise are analogous to toxic smog. We would be wrong, he argues, to focus on treating individuals who are most sensitive to smog; it is our responsibility to eliminate the environmental conditions that made them sick to begin with. Another example Pool uses is the dosing of little boys with Ritalin to make them conform to an unnatural school setting. But a better analogy might be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our public policy response to a substance such as alcohol, which, like food, can be consumed and enjoyed in moderation by most people, but which has extremely negative consequences for those people susceptible to overindulgence. If the analogy to alcohol is the best one, the implication is that a war on fat would be waged, like the "noble experiment" of Prohibition, at great cost to our liberties and with little prospect of success.

If we are to have a free society, there must be some limit to how far government can go in compelling citizens to do things "for their own good." John Locke in the "Letter on Toleration" deemed it obvious that "in the conservation of bodily health, every man may consider what suits his own conveniency, and follow what course he likes best." For Locke, the person who ruins his own health through excessive intake of food or drink was *the* example to clinch his case against unjust political intrusion into private decisions in other matters, such as religion. If government must address the obesity epidemic at all, the legal acceptance of drug therapy — provided that it is voluntarily undertaken by informed patients — is surely preferable to Big Brother.

THE OBESITY epidemic in America is real, though it is far from clear that the problem can be helpfully addressed through government policies. We could remove soda and candy machines from public schools and schedule gym class for every day of the week, but no one should overestimate the likely impact of these or similar measures. Klein and Pool do a good job summarizing the state of our current knowledge regarding overweight and obesity, and from this summary, it is clear that we still know far too little for government to venture forth with confidence to reform anyone's eating habits. The problem goes beyond the issue of obviously fraudulent weight-loss programs, such as those that promise "effortless," "miraculous," and "magical" results. Even the research findings of respectable institutions using "scientific" methods have produced a mass of contradictory findings and advice. Americans are rightly tired of "expert" medical opinion that changes from year to year, and even month to month. First butter is bad and margarine is good, but then it is learned that margarine is worse than butter, and neither is as good as olive oil. First fat is bad, but then we learn that too much sugar is bad, and then too much protein is bad, so does that mean that food is bad, period?

One unequivocal scientific finding, however, deserves greater public dissemination, even though it goes against the grain of our optimistic, relentlessly self-improving American culture (and the weight loss industry which caters to it). The old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is particularly relevant to weight, and honest health education needs to help people understand the biological mechanisms that make weight gain so difficult to reverse. The great twelfth century philosopher and physician Maimonides advised his patients that it was best to leave the dinner table while still retaining some appetite, and before reaching the point of full satiety. Maybe he knew what he was talking about.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America's Future Foundation educates and mobilizes today's young Americans and tomorrow's leaders in support of limited government, free markets, personal

"The hot new group of young conservative professionals"
–NATIONAL REVIEW

responsibility, moral virtue, world leadership, and technological progress. Through its educational and outreach programs, the

"Any up-and-coming woman or man wanting to be someone is on their list"
–WASHINGTON TIMES

Foundation provides the mechanism to harness the political and social energy of like-minded young professionals, broadcasting its positive message nationwide.

AMERICA'S FUTURE FOUNDATION
"a network of America's next generation of classical liberal leaders"

www.americasfuture.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Acton Institute
American Association of Christian Schools
American Conservative Union
American Legislative Exchange Council
Americans for Tax Reform
Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs
The Bradley Foundation
Capital Research Center
Christian Coalition
Citizens Against Government Waste
Claremont Institute
Concerned Women for America
Commonwealth Foundation
CPAC 2000
Family Research Council
Federalist Digest
The Federalist Society
Thomas B. Fordham Foundation
Freedom Network
Friedman Foundation
Frontiers of Freedom Institute
Greening Earth Society
Galen Institute
The Heritage Foundation
Human Life Review
Insight Magazine
Institute for Policy Innovation
Intercollegiate Studies Institute
Justice Fellowship
Landmark Legal Foundation
Leadership Institute
Lone Star Report
Luce Policy Institute
Media Research Center
National Review
National Right To Work
National Taxpayers Union
National Wilderness Institute
Of the People
Oliver North Radio Show
Pacific Research Institute
The Philadelphia Society
Pioneer Institute
PrimaryScoop.com
Texas Public Policy Foundation
Traditional Values Coalition
Washington Times Weekly Edition
Weekly Standard
The World & I
Young America's Foundation

townhall .com
CONSERVATIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION

The conservative movement.

All in one place.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Gramsci v. *Tocqueville*

SIR, — John Fonte's article is fascinating both for its representation of Gramsci's thought and for the alternative it offers. However, the alternative is one that is simply a pretense that a different set of subjective ideological wishes is somehow more inherently objective than the set of values it wishes to replace.

In a loose sense, Gramsci is unquestionably correct. Forgetting loaded terms of "oppressor" and "oppressed": Obviously every society runs on a social system of subjective values, values vulnerable to the destructive power of an objective thought that distances people from values and weakens the emotional bond on which values are based.

Objective analysis is, of course, relevant to values. If one places a high value on economic freedom and its results and then argues for government regulation, he makes an obviously irrational connection of means and ends. But if one person or society places a high value on modern economic freedom and its results (and on a rational method of achieving this), while another places a higher value on a high rate of group cohesion possible only in a nonmodern society, there is no objective way of demonstrating the superiority of one over the other.

Conservatives, of course, see such reasoning as their bete noire, cultural relativism. It is cultural relativism, the sociological equivalent of empiricism and the only sensible way of studying societies. (Cultural relativism may well have disastrous social consequences as a population becomes increasingly distant emotionally from its society's values, rendering the society incapable of inculcating its values in that population. But this consequence is to sociology as the hydrogen bomb is to physics: a terrible consequence but one that is irrelevant to the objective explanation of empirical fact.)

What one makes of this is, no doubt, a function of one's personality. I, myself, am a child of the 1960s and see the social scientist's primary task to be the exposing of values for what they are — values, not facts. And the only way to accomplish this is to place truth above all. Truth is the most viciously revolutionary tool we have, but not one that enables us to tell people with which values they should replace the values we destroy.

The crime of the current left is not that they wish to expose values for what they are, but that they substitute equally subjective values and, worse, make up facts in order to do so.

In this sense the left is worse than the right. Conservatives, like the left, pretend that their values are somehow objective facts, but at least don't make up their facts as they go along. Conservative arguments are, however, no less tendentious just because they argue for a different set of values.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is a human trait to believe that "the truth shall set us free," but what is invariably meant when one says this is that "the truth will support my values." As the philosopher likes to say, "Is cannot generate ought." Virtually any consistent value system, be it of the left or the right, can be made concordant with the truth and the truth can never entail a value system.

It's not the job of the scientist (as scientist) to advocate any set of values. Decisions about values are for the population to make, on the basis of the population's desires and on objective facts uncontaminated by observer values.

The wonderful thing about truth — second only to the fact that truth is true — is that it is defiant, whatever the nature of a society and its leaders.

To exchange this for a mere opportunity to hustle one set of values for another is a terrible trade-off.

STEVEN GOLDBERG
Chairman
Department of Sociology
City College
City University of New York

SIR, — John Fonte makes a persuasive case against the inroads of the Gramscian concept of group rights in the American setting. He fails to note, though, the State Department's policy objectives and prescriptions for other countries that continue to be Tocquevillian. Policy wonks give little recognition to the fact that the Tocquevillian model is untransferable to and unworkable in many parts of the world due to ethnohistorical legacies and the absence of a democratic tradition.

What is appropriate for the U.S. may not be appropriate elsewhere. In many countries, where different nationalities cohabit, the argument for group rights is not social engineering as envisioned by Gramscians but a necessity for the protection of elemental human rights of minorities. A case in point is Transylvania. For over a millenium, it was a part of the Kingdom of Hungary or an independent entity as an outcome of the Ottoman excursion into Europe. After the First World War, without a plebiscite, the victorious powers assigned it to Romania. The nationalities living there were not asked about their preferences. The breakup of the former Czechoslovakia and the chaos in the Balkans today is a direct outcome of the redrawing of borders and the balance of power "realism" run amok.

To this day, the Hungarians living in Transylvania, close to 2 million in number, remain second-class citizens under strong assimilationist pressures. A decade after the fall of communism, the Romanian State still does not allow the establishment of a Hungarian language university. This despite the provision of the Romanian constitution that guarantees the right of every citizen to be educated at all levels in his or her native tongue. Denial of educational opportunities in their native tongue for the autochthonous population amounts to a form of state-sponsored racism, the violation of linguistic human rights. Bishop Toekes, the hero of Timisoara of the Romanian Revolution, has publicly stated it well. He said that he does not believe that a bureaucrat, hundreds of miles away, has the right to decide what his son should or should not learn about history or decide the language of instruction. Where nationalism, bol-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stered by the power of the state, takes precedence over the rule of law, the citizen has no chance for a remedy. In Romania, as in many other countries, the Tocquevillian model is unworkable.

Formulators of our foreign policy need to recognize that what is best for America may be inappropriate in countries whose cultural and historical developments are different. In these places group rights, though not of the Gramscian kind, indeed can defuse tensions.

C.K. Zoltani
Lutherville, Md.

Essential Reforms for the Military

Sir, — Philip Gold does an excellent job of chronicling where our military has been ("The Essentials of Self-Preservation," December 2000/January 2001). However, I find some of his proposed remedies wanting. Rather than a prescription for recovering from the "decline and decay" of the 1990s and preparing the armed forces to meet twenty-first century requirements, two of his proposals will merely cause the death spiral to continue.

While few reasonable people can argue against the need for the allocation of more funds, increased spending by itself will be of little value unless the armed forces enjoy the freedom to spend these funds on items essential to the military mission. While Pentagon business reforms will go far towards assisting in the effort to carefully target spending, reducing the excess military infrastructure will do much greater good. Increasing financial resources will do little for the armed forces if they are required to continue to spend money for bases no longer needed nor desired. If the armed forces have been reduced by approximately 40 percent over the past 10 years, then it stands to reason that the infrastructure should have been reduced by a similar amount. Despite the best efforts of the Base Realignment and Closing Commission (BRAC) of the 1980s and '90s, the political intrigues of the Clinton administration undermined efforts to close excess and costly bases in vote-rich states. Just as influential is the barrage of propaganda from senators, representatives, governors, and municipal leaders when the nominally independent BRAC surgeons start wielding their scalpels around a source of jobs and revenue.

What should be on the table, then, is every military base, post, station, port and depot with consolidations and closures continuing until the military infrastructure matches the military force. Reviewing the lessons from those bases that were successfully closed, we know that, in the short term, this course of action will cost more rather than less money as facilities are disestablished and areas cleaned of old munitions, waste and toxins.

However, once the program is complete, the armed forces will find themselves able to dedicate a healthier portion of their budget to what is generally termed military readiness.

The other item that causes me great angst is Mr. Gold's proposal for a Peace Force. Having already noted that peacekeeping, peacemaking and humanitarian operations have a net negative effect on military readiness

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and morale as well as requiring triple the committed force, why then propose more of the same?

Notwithstanding his admonition that this Peace Force would make maximum use of nonmilitary assets, once the ongoing missions exceed the military structure committed to the Peace Force, the Pentagon will have no other recourse than to recur to the warriors for more manpower. In short, the situation in which the armed forces presently find themselves.

Consider for a moment two indisputable facts. First, the United States has the only armed forces capable of unilaterally engaging in combat operations anywhere in the world without requiring support from third countries. Second, many of our allies (Canada comes readily to mind) who are not capable of unilaterally undertaking, let alone sustaining, combat forces beyond their own borders already have established units for military operations other than war (MOOTW). Another way to view military operations other than war is as "military operations other than military operations" — deployments that are detrimental to the combat effectiveness of forces whose primary purpose is the application of controlled violence when such efforts are in the national security interest of the United States. Moreover, there is no historical basis for specially training U.S. forces for peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, inasmuch as the Marines on occupation duty in Central America and the Caribbean in the 1920s and '30s, arguably the forerunners of today's MOOTW, were the same Marines who successfully retook Guadalcanal from the Japanese in August 1942.

The United States and the United Nations should rely, when needed, on countries with established units for military operations other than war, with the U.S. poised to provide logistical support in extreme cases. The appearance of U.S. troops on foreign shores should signify but one thing to the world: that we are there as a last resort because diplomatic, humanitarian, and peacemaking or peacekeeping efforts have failed — therefore, that we are there to deal in violence.

By returning to a principle that the U.S. armed forces are to be used only for warfighting, we will, over the long run, be less likely to suffer casualties such as those that occurred in Somalia when a combat force was committed without the necessary manpower, equipment, and freedom of action to react to the situation that confronted them.

DAVE ERCHULL
Major, USMC (Ret.)
Tucson, Ariz.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Policy Review welcomes letters to the editor. Write to: *Policy Review*, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington DC 20002. You may also e-mail polrev@heritage.org. Please include your name and phone number.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLICY *Review*

Politics
Society &
Culture
National Policy
Foreign Affairs
Essays &
Reviews

Védrinism: France's Global Ambition
by Christopher Caldwell

The "Chineseness" of Taiwan
by Arthur Waldron

Bring Back the Laxalt Doctrine
by John R. Bolton

African Atrocities and "the Rest of the World"
by Mark Bowden

Russia: Too Sick to Matter?
by Nicholas Eberstadt

The Conservative Case for NATO
by Bruce Pitcairn Jackson

Read these and other recent articles from Policy Review on our website: www.policyreview.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED